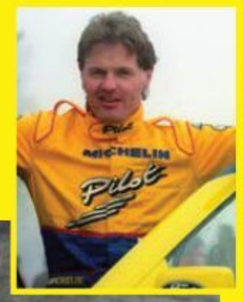
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MALCOLM WILSON



M-Sport boss tackles the questions set for him by you, the readers p20

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Heartbreak for Evans as the World champion turns the screw in tough African event

OGIER TAKES ADVANTAGE AS EVANS SLIPS UP ON SAFARI RALLY

Ogier took his fourth victory of the season

Evans was left ruing a missed chance

By Graham Lister

Elfyn Evans was one of the big losers from a chaotic Safari Rally last weekend.

The Welshman left Kenya 34 points down on Toyota team-mate Sebastien Ogier after he hit a rock and retired on the third stage while running fourth.

World champion Ogier fought back from a troubled opening morning, when a technical issue dropped him to seventh, to become a four-time winner in 2021.

That was after long-term leader Thierry Neuville retired his Hyundai with broken suspension on the final morning's first stage following another disastrous showing from the South Korean make. Although it proved a tough trip to East Africa for Evans, Briton Daniel Barritt co-drove Takamoto Katsuta to second overall for Toyota's fourth 1-2 of 2021 and Katsuta's first podium..

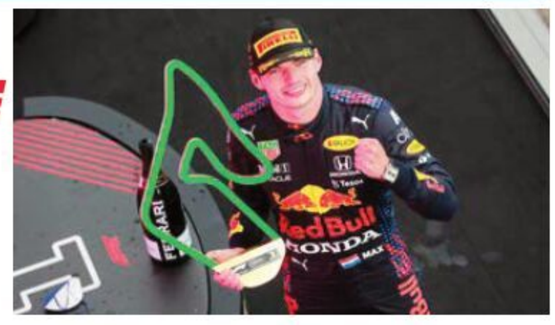
Full report p16

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT MOTORSPORT NEWS

FORMULA 1

RED BULL GOES ON THE RAMPAGE IN AUSTRIA

Max has that winning feeling once more p4



NATIONAL RALLYING

GUNNING FOR THE MN RALLY GLORY

We look ahead to Circuit Rally showdown p27

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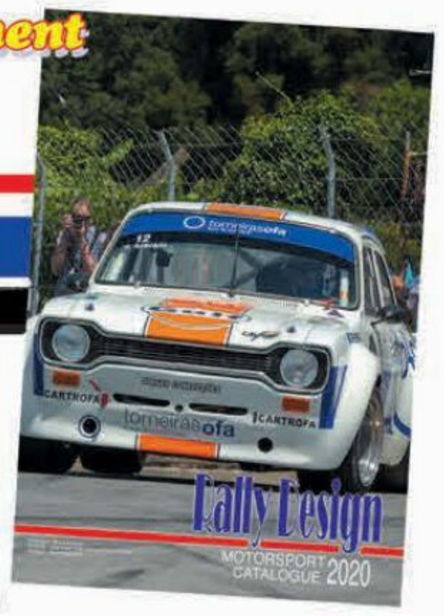

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Shock absorber top caps	pair	£13.90	£16.68
Rear bumper side plugs, set of 4		£9.90	£11.88
Oil line bulkhead grommet		£5.10	£6.12
Brake servo rod bellows		£5.20	£6.24

PLEASE NOTE: All prices in Red are EXCLUSIVE OF VAT

COMMENT

Photo: Toyota Gazoo Racing, Steve Hindle, Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Sebastien Ogier continued Toyota's domination of the World Rally Championship

SAFARI STILL HAS A STING

Although there were many who were saying that the reborn Safari Rally would be nothing like the classic, epic events that had gone before, there was no doubting that the return of Africa to the World Rally Championship gave a test unlike any other that the competitors will face in this year's competition.

Dani Sordo, Kalle Rovanpera and, unfortunately, Elfyn Evans, were only able to make it to the end of the 18 stages with the help of the Super Rally rules, which enabled them to restart after earlier disasters. They were the lucky ones: Thierry Neville and Oliver Solberg were caught out so badly that they were unable to complete the Safari's challenge.

So it did provide something extraordinary for those who took part and it has added a fresh twist to the WRC roster – albeit with a historical twist. Embracing Africa is something that international motorsport hasn't really done this century, and it is something that should be encouraged.

One man who had a keen eye on all that was going on in Kenya was Malcolm Wilson, whose cars, driven by Gus Greensmith and Adrien Fourmaux, are clearly made of rugged stuff. But that shouldn't be a surprise. Wilson, the boss of ultra-successful World Rally Team M-Sport, knows a thing or two about how to produce potent rally weapons.

He kindly took time out of his busy schedule to answer the Motorsport News readers' questions this week, and his answers are fascinating. Wilson is a man who has made the absolute most out of passion for rallying and motorsport in general, and the progress of M-Sport is such that it is only the opening chapters that have been written so far. As the WRC embraces a new hybrid generation, M-Sport will once again be at the cutting edge of a new wave in world rallying. Business never stops.

The passion for our sport never stops either. Motorsport News is embracing the fact that motorsport is back! As we gradually claw out way out of the lockdown situations that have been so hard for everyone, fans are returning to the tracksides and hopefully, by the end of this month, the spectator areas in the forests and next to the circuits can be full once more.

To acknowledge that, and to reaffirm our commitment to bringing you the best coverage we can, MN will contain extra content from now on to encompass the entire sport as it learns to blink again.

Allied to that, we are seeking your opinions on Motorsport News to help us bring you the very latest news, features and insight that you expect. To let us know your opinions, and to be in with a chance to win a handsome cash prize, turn to page 31. Thanks in advance for your help.

Matt James
Editor, Motorsport News
matt.james@kelsey.co.uk

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Eyes on North Wales for MN Circuit battle

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Tin-tops thrill in Brands Hatch BTCC showdowns

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FORMULA 1 REPORT: STYRIA

Photos: Motorsport Images

Max dominated the race at Red Bull's home

Verstappen was easily about to outpace Hamilton and Mercedes

RED BULL BREAKS THE SPELL IN THE MODERN GRAND PRIX ERA

Milton Keynes team halts the Silver machine. By James Roberts

A long afternoon for Lewis...

There is a new force at the top of Formula 1. For the first time in eight years, four races have now passed without a Mercedes victory. When Max Verstappen dominated the Styrian Grand Prix on Sunday it marked a significant turning point in this era of grand prix motorsport.

Never before in the turbo-hybrid formula (which began in 2014) has Red Bull scored four consecutive wins. And with a second race at its home track this coming weekend, it's difficult to see beyond another triumph for the Milton Keynes team.

Verstappen led from pole position and was never challenged by the second-placed Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton over 71 laps. It was a commanding drive on the team's home turf in Spielberg, with the Styrian mountains proving a picturesque backdrop. Indeed, Hamilton was at a loss to explain why the Red Bull was so quick.

"It's pretty impressive speed they have," said Hamilton. "I was giving it everything. I don't know where they are gaining their advantage, I think it's the straights. They have definitely made some big steps over the last couple of races and we've not really got an answer for it."

Verstappen held a gap of four seconds to Hamilton in the early stages and that increased when both switched to the hard tyre from lap 30 onwards. The seven-time champion made a second stop on lap 70 for softs and claimed the bonus point for fastest lap on the final tour of the Red Bull Ring. But he had to concede that overall, Mercedes was second best in Styria.

Everything ran smoothly for Verstappen up front, who drove a "masterclass" according to Red Bull's Christian Horner. A minor issue with his brake pedal over the kerbs at Turn 10 was his only mid-race concern and even the weather was on his side. Any threat of a thunderstorm or dramatic late-race safety car intervention never materialised.

"The car was on fire today, so nice to drive," said the Dutchman as he lit up his rear wheels in celebration across the finish line. "Keep turning the screw," was Horner's reply.

The answer to why Red Bull has taken a step in performance compared to Mercedes might be explained by the big change in regulations coming for next year. As this year's car has been a carry-over from 2020, virtually every team have exhausted their development programmes and are focusing all its efforts on their new 2022 machines. But Red Bull appears to have split their engineering resources and is continuing to bring upgrades to this year's car.

"I can't remember the last time we brought an upgrade, but they have," confirmed Hamilton. "They have clearly bought an engine upgrade and some other part of the package and it's just eked them ahead. Maybe they have spent more money than us this year, maybe we have put more money into next year. Who knows?"

Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas took third, despite a spirited final stint from the second Red Bull of Sergio Perez. The Mexican had lost out to Bottas when his left-rear was slow to be removed at the first pitstop.

In a bid to reclaim third place, Red Bull called Perez in for a second stop towards the end, to hunt down the Finn with fresher rubber. Over the final 15 laps, Perez closed an 18.5-second gap to the Mercedes, but missed out on third by just 0.527s at the flag.

After starting a brilliant third on the grid, Lando Norris continued his excellent form with fifth – continuing to be the only driver to score points in every race this year. He had been overtaken by Perez on the first lap at Turn 3 but recovered the place back one corner later. By lap 11 he had conceded his place to the faster Red Bull and also Bottas to run fifth.

One week on from a disastrous French GP, Ferrari enjoyed a better showing with Carlos Sainz finishing sixth in Spielberg, ahead of his team-mate. Charles Leclerc received the driver of the day fan vote after an excellent comeback drive. He pitted on the first lap after making contact with the AlphaTauri of Pierre Gasly on the run down to Turn 3.

Leclerc described his drive as one of his best in F1 - one week after one of his worse. Contrasting fortunes appear to be a recurring theme this year. Who will be ruing their luck next Sunday?

Norris drove his own race to keep up his scoring record in 2021

F1 RESULTS

STYRIAN GRAND PRI
Laps: 71 Track: Red Bull Ring

	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull-Honda	1h22m18.925s
2	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+35.743s
3	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes	+46.907s
4	Sergio Perez	Red Bull-Honda	+47.434s
5	Lando Norris	McLaren-Mercedes	-1 lap
6	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	-1 lap
7	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	-1 lap
8	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin-Mercedes	-1 lap
9	Fernando Alonso	Alpine-Renault	-1 lap
10	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri-Honda	-1 lap

11 Kimi Raikkonen (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) -1 lap; 12 Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin-Mercedes) - 1 lap; 13 Daniel Ricciardo (McLaren-Mercedes) -1lap; 14 Esteban Ocon (Alpine-Renault) -1 lap; 15 Antonio Giovinazzi (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) -1 lap; 16 Mick Schumacher (Haas-Ferrari) -2 laps; 17 Nicholas Latifi (Williams-Mercedes) -3 laps; 18 Nikita Mazepin (Haas-Ferrari) -3 laps; 19 George Russell (Williams-Mercedes) 36 laps/pneumatics; 20 Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri-Honda) 1 lap/accident. **Drivers' championship:** 1 Verstappen 156 points; 2 Hamilton 138; 3 Perez 96; 4 Norris 86; 5 Bottas 74; 6 Leclerc 58. **Constructors:** 1 Red Bull 252 points; 2 Mercedes 212; 3 McLaren 120; 4 Ferrari 108; 5 AlphaTauri 46; 6 Aston Martin 44. **Next race:** Austrian Grand Prix, July 3-4.

Pneumatics give Russell the blues after shining in Spielberg

A dejected George Russell missed out on scoring his first points for Williams when a reliability issue forced him to retire from the Styrian Grand P.rix The British driver was battling Fernando Alonso for seventh place when the problems began.

"We were having a great race and after 14 laps the team said we needed to do a two-stop as we had a rare pneumatic issue with the car," said Russell. "The team apologised, but there was no need, we're in this together."

It had been a strong weekend for Russell who just missed out on making Q3 in qualifying for the first time in a Williams by just 0.008 seconds. He started 10th and had the pace for a points finish until the mechanical issues struck.

Williams last scored a point when Robert Kubica was 10th in the 2019 German Grand Prix.

"Racing is cruel sometimes," added Russell. "It's never straightforward."

Lewis fired up by the fight to talk about his future in Formula 1

Lewis Hamilton is "very hungry" to continue racing in Formula 1 according to Mercedes boss Toto Wolff.

The seven-time world champion has begun contract negotiations to extend his career in the sport beyond this year.

"We are hoping to get it done much faster than we did last time," said Hamilton. "We don't want to fall into the same trap.

"It's quite chilled as well – we always talked about not wanting to do it mid-season because it would be a distraction – but we've done it in a way that is light-hearted."

Hamilton is currently on a one-year deal, which was only finalised in February, but Wolff said that the championship fight has ignited a hunger in the 36-year-old to continue.

"It's a new situation for him, that it is so tight in the battle with another team and another driver and I see him in very good spirits," said Wolff.

Brit George Russell was thwarted in his quest for a points finish

RACING NEWS

FANS WELCOMED BACK TO FORMULA 1 AT SILVERSTONE LATER THIS MONTH

Testing programme status from the UK government means the public can attend British GP

Photo: Motorsport Images

Silverstone will host fans again

By Matt James

The British Grand Prix will run in front of 100,000 fans as the government has confirmed that the event will be part of its events testing programme.

Bosses of the race, which is due to take place on July 18, one day before the proposed lifting of all lockdown restrictions, had been in talks with Whitehall officials to try and lift limitations on crowd numbers and got the green light late last week.

Fans will have to have proof of a negative lateral flow test taken within 48 hours of arrival at the Northamptonshire circuit, or they have to have evidence of a second vaccine jab at least 14 days before the race.

Silverstone's managing director, Stuart Pringle, said he was delighted that the limitations had been lifted

"Many of our fans rolled their tickets over from 2020 but they are now well placed to enjoy what is sure to be one of the highlights of the summer," he said

The Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said the event was allowed to go ahead in part because of the successful rollout of the vaccine.

He said: "We are continuing to make progress, and events like this will pave the way for everyone to enjoy live sport and culture together safely once more."

Silverstone stepped into the breach last season as many races were cancelled due to the coronavirus. It hosted the third and fourth rounds of the 2020 F1 campaign but both events – the British Grand Prix and the 70th Anniversary Grand Prix – were held behind closed doors.

RUSSIAN GRAND PRIX TO GET A NEW HOME FOR 2023

The Russian Grand Prix will move from its home in Sochi to a new venue on the outskirts of St Petersburg from 2023.

Sochi, built around the template of a former Olympic Park, has hosted the Russian GP since it was first run in 2014, but the decision has been made to move the event to a new venue in Igora Park near St Petersburg.

The switch has the backing of president Vladimir Putin, who was instrumental in getting the race to the home of his summer palace in Sochi in the first place. A statement from Formula 1 said that the new site would offer great flexibility.

It read: "[Igora] includes 10 professional tracks for racing and testing over approximately 100 hectares. It is located 54km from St Petersburg, was designed by German architect Hermann Tilke and in 2020 received its FIA Grade One licence. We will be providing more details on the race in the coming months."

Sochi will be saying farewell to grand prix racing

Powell led home Moore

POWELL'S PERFECT WEEKEND TO KICK OFF W SERIES BID

Alice Powell took her second W Series career victory in the opening rounds of the championship at the Red Bull Ring last weekend.

She converted pole position to a win in a race that was mired by collisions and she headed home fellow Brit Sarah Moore. Powell had topped every practice session on her way to victory.

"To have a weekend that I have is incredible," she said.

"I'm going to keep my feet firmly on the ground, as we've still got seven race weekends left. I've not seen, but I've heard that the race was pretty crazy and really enjoyable and you just never know what can happen."

Jessica Hawkins was fifth in the race, two places ahead of the inaugural champion Jamie Chadwick, who had been delayed when she was in collision with Hawkins on the second lap of the race.

The next round of the W Series, which has confirmed that it will move away from a centrally-organised race set-up to individual teams in the 2022 season, is supporting this weekend's Austrian GP.

TURKEY BACK ON THE AGENDA FOR F1 IN 2021

It has been confirmed that the Turkish Grand Prix will run for a second consecutive season in 2021 as a result of the cancellation of the race in Singapore, which has fallen victim to Covid restrictions.

The race, which returned to the calendar last season amid a massively reworked schedule, is due to run on October 2-3, just one week before the proposed date of the Japanese GP, although that race too is understood to be under scrutiny.

Turkey was initially added to the calendar to replace the lost Canadian GP, then it was removed when the country gained red list status. However, it is hoped that situation will change with its date later in the year.

F1 president Stefano Domenicali said: "We have had very good conversations with all the other promoters since the start of the year and continue to work closely with them during this period."

F1 pitstops will new be slower

GP BOSSES TO CLAMP DOWN ON SPEEDY PITSTOPS IN F1

Formula 1's technical ruler, the FIA, has taken measures to slow down the pitstop times of grand prix cars in an effort to increase safety.

From the Hungarian Grand Prix on August 1, the governors will be scrutinising each halt to make sure that teams aren't using any automated release systems, which is against the current rules.

The new decree from the FIA states that, from the Hungaroring race onwards, there must be a tolerance within each pitstop to allow for human reaction times in giving the signal to the driver to release the car from its halt.

The clampdown is not prompted by any one particular team, but Red Bull has been the king of the ultra-fast stop and has regularly achieved tyre swaps in less than two seconds

The new FIA technical directive says: "For safety reasons we would… expect the minimum time offset between the initiation of the jack release procedure and the OK signal to the driver given by the green light to be at least 0.2 seconds."

CELEBRATION GETS WINNER MAX VERSTAPPEN IN HOT WATER

Styrian Grand Prix winner Max Verstappen has been given a rap on the knuckles for performing a victory burn-out as he collected the glory.

The Red Bull-Honda driver celebrated as he claimed his fourth win of 2021 by smoking the tyres on his machine and that immediately drew the attention of race director Michael Masi, who took a dim view.

Drivers are allowed to perform doughnuts in certain designated areas of a circuit, but he thought that Verstappen had taken liberties by doing it opposite the pitwall.

Masi said: "It was not an ideal situation, which is why I spoke to the team immediately and told them accordingly, that it's something that would not be tolerated in the future."

Verstappen will have to tone down his victory celebrations

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RACING NEWS

Title is in BMW man's sights

Photo: Jakob Ebrey

Turkington came away from Brands with only two points added

TURKINGTON: BRANDS FORM WAS JUST A BLIP IN THE CHASE FOR THE BTCC TITLE

WSR BMW man says nadir in Kent will kickstart an upturn in form for 2021

By Matt James

Four-time British Touring Car title winner Colin Turkington says he is not pressing the panic button in this year's battle for the crown despite a lacklustre weekend at Brands Hatch where he only collected two points across three races.

The WSR BMW 330i M Sport driver went to the weekend in Kent with 57kg of success ballast, and said that the extra weight torpedoed his chances on the compact 1.2-mile layout. He qualified in 14th position and was spun out of race one. He recovered for 14th place in the finale at Brands, his only points of the weekend.

"We were just chasing our tails all day on Saturday to get the car working. We weren't generating grip," he explained. "We tested at Brands in early April and we left with a good car but it wasn't there last weekend.

"When you look at the lap times in qualifying and even the races, I wasn't a million miles away from the ultimate pace, but it is so tight around Brands. When you are stuck it the mid-pack and you get involved with others, it is so hard to progress. It is even harder this year without the option tyre, because everyone is on the same strategy. There are no cards to play."

Turkington is now 39 points away from table-topper Ash Sutton in his Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50, but says that he expects his machine to be back at the front once the championship returns from its summer break at Oulton Park on August 1.

The Northern Irishman said: "I am not concerned [by what happened at Brands]. If you look at our past seasons, I have had some rocky starts before. Then, usually, I will hit a purple patch in the middle of the year when we go to track that suits us better.

"I go to Oulton with marginally less weight than I had at Brands [48kg as opposed to 57kg] but somehow I am still fourth in the points table. All we can do is stick to what we are good at and bounce back. We are not lost, by any means."

FLETCHER AND PLOWMAN SWITCH TO OWN TEAM FOR BRITISH GT

Kelvin Fletcher and Martin Plowman at last weekend's Silverstone 500 raced in British GT with their own Paddock Motorsport team for the first time.

The British GT4 Pro-Am champion pair graduated to British GT's GT3 contest this year and raced their Bentley Continental with JRM Racing in May's Brands Hatch season-opener. Their Paddock Motorsport team made its debut in Mazda MX-5 Supercup last year and this year expanded to GT Cup.

Explaining the change, Fletcher told MN: "Things out of our control and disappointing elsewhere with JRM as customers – [as] me and Martin were – and our sponsors.

"But it was an opportunity for us to stand up and inherit a racing programme. Eighteen months ago we were running three Mazdas in the MX-5 championship, today we're in arguably the most competitive GT series throughout Europe.

"We took a big bite, we had a good chew, we're committed for the year. This is where we wanted to be, but two, three, years down the line, it's earlier than we anticipated. But with every bit of adversity there's opportunity. We're confident; engineer-wise there's a little bit of continuity."

Fletcher has taken a "big bite"

David Brabham (centre) will host the race on behalf of MND charity

BRABHAM RESURRECTS KART RACE TO FIGHT MND

David Brabham is helping host a star-studded charity karting event at Thruxton next month to raise funds for The Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Le Mans winner Brabham alongside Bill Williams is staging Karting4MND, a two-hour endurance race on Thursday August 26, and with it resurrects the Racing4Charity fundraising partnership renowned for its charity kart races.

Kelvin Burt, Racing4Charity event winners Duncan Tappy, Sam Bird and Will Stevens, Rob, Jordan and Ricky Collard, Ben Barnicoat and Rick Parfitt will join Brabham competing on track. There will be 18 teams of four to six professional drivers.

The race is staged in honour of Williams' younger brother Gideon who was diagnosed with MND in 2019, and in memory of racer Neil Cunningham who passed away from MND in 2016.

Brabham said: "I have quite a few people in my life who have either passed away or are suffering from this dreadful disease and it is heartbreaking to see the suffering MND causes."

Donate to Karting4MND via Just Giving or by texting MNDKART10 to 70085 to donate £10.

BRITISH GT VICTOR 2 SEAS DISMISSES RIVALS' COMPLAINTS AT SILVERSTONE

The 2 Seas team has dismissed complaints from rivals about its car and driver line-up after claiming a dominant pole and victory in British GT's showpiece Silverstone 500.

Complaints included Hunter Abbott being allowed to race as a Bronze-graded driver. "That car should never be on the grid with that line-up, that's not a British GT Pro-Am line-up," rival Leo Machitski told Motorsport News.

Dan Shufflebottom, boss of RAM Racing that also races Mercedes, added to MN: "We know what we'd have to do to make our cars 4mph faster than the other car and it's not possible to do with anything that's not electronic."

The 2 Seas car was looked at by the championship, AMG and the GT Bureau and nothing amiss was found.

2 Seas boss Nick Cristofaro told MN: "[Straightline speed was] down to trimmed set-up, if you look on the deltas there was no difference. The McLaren and Bentley were down the road on us in straightline [speed]. It's always an easy excuse.

"We asked if our [driver] pairing was acceptable, it was accepted, [Abbott] is rated a Bronze. The teams that said that need to look on their Pros because there was a bigger gap in Pros' qualifying than in the Ams."

Mercedes drew complaints

PATTERSON EXCLUDED FROM F3 MEETING

Dexter Patterson was disqualified from last weekend's BRDC British Formula 3 meeting at Silverstone following an altercation after the second race of the triple-header meeting.

Motorsport News understands the Douglas Motorsport driver, after finishing 17th in race two following contact with Carlin pilot Bryce Aron, had an argument with a marshal and Aron in parc ferme.

The clerk of the course found Patterson guilty of contravening Motorsport UK Regulation C1.1.9 – relating to abusive behaviour, physical assault, or threats of physical assault – and Patterson was disqualified from the meeting and issued six penalty points. With this he also lost his Silverstone race-one sixth place.

GOFF TIPS CUPRA FOR SUCCESS AFTER BRANDS

Brands Hatch British Touring Car Championship podium finisher Jack Goff says the category's upcoming two-day tyre test at Oulton Park in July will help him and the Team Hard squad unlock more pace from its brand-new Cupra R machine.

Goff finished second in the reversed-grid finale at Brands Hatch on Sunday and thinks that the five-week hiatus – which includes the two days of running in Cheshire – has come at the ideal time.

Goff said: "To get a podium in our third meeting is stunning. But now we have some time to dig down a bit deeper into the set-up. There are some areas we still need to work on, and the Oulton test will give us a great leg-up for the remainder of the season."

Morgan: thrilled with BTCC win

MORGAN PROMISES MORE TIN-TOP SUCCESS

Ciceley Motorsport British Touring Car Championship driver Adam Morgan says his squad can kick on with understanding its new-for-2021 BMW 330i M Sports after he took the team's maiden win with the rear-wheel-drive car at Brands Hatch on Sunday.

Morgan, who started on pole position for the reversed grid finale encounter in Kent, raced clear to an unchallenged ninth career triumph.

He said the victory showed that his team, operated by his father Russell, was getting to grips with a rear drivetrain layout. The team, which also runs Tom Chilton, has switched from front-wheel-drive Mercedes to the WSR-built machines.

Morgan said: "The result at Brands Hatch is a testament to the work the team has put in, and we will only get better from here. We did most of our testing over the winter when the weather was colder, so when you come to the actual race meetings you still have some way to go to find the perfect set-up.

"This win is a reward for the boys, but it also shows that we are getting to grips with the cars and that we are moving forward."

MOTORSPORT UK'S DRIFT PRO CHAMPIONSHIP IS GO

UK governing body steps into drifting competition for first time with spectacular category's Brands bow

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, Drew Gibson.

Fine show for Brands fans

Motorsport UK is sanctioning a drifting competition for first time

By Graham Keilloh

The Motorsport UK Drift Pro Championship made its debut at Brands Hatch 10 days ago in the governing body's first-ever sanctioned drifting competition.

The initiative is a collaboration between Motorsport UK and Club Time Attack, which has drifting knowledge and experience.

Drifting competition is determined by judges' scores on cars' visual line, angle and speed, rather than on the stopwatch. Martin Richards topped Brands' inaugural contest as well as the auxiliary Driftkhana battle. There also were best-presented team and car awards.

"[It was] amazing, it surpassed our expectations not only in the way the event ran but in the quality of the drifting," Time Attack coordinator Simon Slade told Motorsport News, "we [had] people who are at the top of the game in the UK.

"The feedback [from competitors] has been nothing but good. We've heard drivers saying 'this is what we wanted', a proper set of regulations technical and sporting to give the sport an extra element of administrative control.

"They're also very keen to run on proper racing circuits. And to have Motorsport UK in the title clearly does give it an extra level of status.

"It went down well with spectators too! I don't think they could quite believe what they were looking at; every 35-40 seconds there was a pair of cars drifting."

The remaining rounds this year will be at Donington Park on August 30 then two at Snetterton on October 23-24. "This year it's about getting it right and next year we're expecting to have a bigger championship," Slade added.

Festival to get full crowd

THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL OF SPEED GETS GREEN LIGHT AS PILOT EVENT

Goodwood's Festival of Speed will go ahead this year with all those who have purchased tickets able to attend, after it was confirmed as an Events Research Programme pilot event.

The move means all ticket, hospitality and grandstand pass holders, including those with tickets rolled over from 2020, can attend the event that now takes place as planned on July 8-11.

As a pilot though all attendees will need to agree to the ERP's conditions of entry, including either having both doses of the Covid vaccine at least 14 days before or proof of a negative Lateral Flow Test within 48 hours of the event.

The Festival is sold out for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday though a limited number of Thursday tickets are still available. The theme of this year's event will be 'The Maestros – Motorsport's Great All-Rounders'.

Sports minister Nigel Huddleston said: "We are continuing to expand the Events Research Programme's remit to include more of our iconic cultural and sporting events. Festival goers will now be able to enjoy [it] up close."

RACING INSURANCE THREAT QUASHED

An existential threat to European motorsport has been averted after the European Parliament and Council last week reached a provisional agreement to revise the Motor Insurance Directive to exempt motorsport.

The European Court of Justice ruling, known as the Vnuk law, has for several years threatened that race cars would be among vehicles used on private land needing insurance cover and racing collisions would be treated as road traffic accidents. Insurance premium estimates were over £500m each year.

However following lobbying, including from the FIA and Motorsport Industry Association, vehicles intended exclusively for motorsports will now be excluded.

"The proposed legislation would have closed down all UK and EU two- and four-wheeled sport" said MIA chief executive Chris Aylett. "The UK's motorsport valley alone has over 4000 companies and 40,000 people employed in this £10bn industry. Not only would millions of fans have lost access to their sport, but [many] would have lost their jobs."

The Department for Transport stated in February it intended to exempt the UK, and therefore UK motorsport, from the directive's implications.

Racing insurance threat averted

NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM EVENT TO PAY MURRAY WALKER TRIBUTE

Walker was life-long museum supporter

Murray Walker's life and unique contribution to motorsport will be celebrated in a tribute evening at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu on Saturday August 14.

The 'Go! Go! Go! Celebrating the life of Murray Walker OBE' event will be hosted by Tiff Needell, and Walker's friends, colleagues and fans will share insights and anecdotes about the life and career of 'the voice of Formula 1', plus put questions to a distinguished panel, alongside a display of iconic two- and four-wheeled racing machines.

There also will be demonstration drives and a 'Racing Revellers Reception' followed by a three-course dinner. In the evening there also will be an auction of carefully selected pieces of memorabilia related to the legendary commentator plus of other items.

Walker was a life-long supporter of the museum while his father Graham was the first curator of Beaulieu's motorcycle collection.

In addition to the Murray Walker event, the annual Graham Walker Memorial Run for vintage motorcycles will take place the following day, on Sunday August 15.

BRITISH GT CHAMPION MITCHELL HAS BRANDS HATCH MINI CHALLENGE OUTING

British GT champion Jack Mitchell returned to Mini Challenge competition at Brands Hatch last weekend after rejoining the championship-winning outfit Excelr8.

The 23-year-old competed in the series with Excelr8 in 2015 in the final two rounds of that season. Last weekend he raced in the JCW class as part of the team's six-car line-up.

Mitchell took British GT's GT4 crown in 2018, as well as bagged an overall GT3 race win last year at Snetterton, though hasn't secured a championship drive for 2021. He also beat Lando Norris and Jamie Chadwick to 2014's Ginetta Junior title.

"I have stayed in touch [with Excler8] since [my appearances in 2015]," Mitchell said, "so when the chance came along to get back in the car, I took it with both hands.

"[It is] the first time I've raced a front-wheel-drive car since 2015. When you are racing in GT3 there can be a lot of pressure on your shoulders and it can make the whole experience less enjoyable, but this is a chance to do something a bit different. Potentially it could open the door to some further outings as the season goes on."

Mitchell: back in Mini contest

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RACING NEWS

Photo: James Roberts, fotospeedy, GT Sport/Euroformula Open, Jakob Ebrey

Mazda racer Souch had tribute car decals

Club paid tribute to official

BRSCC HOLDS SILVERSTONE TRIBUTE TO CLUB STALWART DAVID PIERRE

The club with Pierre's family present held a parade and displayed a significant Mazda MX-5 in memory of the long-serving official

By Graham Keilloh

The British Racing and Sports Car Club at its recent Silverstone meeting held a tribute to its long-time servant David Pierre who passed away last month aged 76.

The tribute took place before the Sunday's second Mazda MX-5 Supercup race in the June 19-20 meeting. The car of Mazda MX-5 racer Luke Souch was at the front of the grid with Pierre's family and club representatives.

Pierre ran a health and safety training consultancy business NTC (UK) Ltd and was a sponsor and mentor of Souch, and Souch for Silverstone placed decals on his car in tribute to Pierre.

"This was my way of saying thank you to Dave, and recognising his investment of time and effort into the sport, and me personally," Souch, who is recently appointed as a full-time BRSCC staff member, told Motorsport News.

The tribute also included a track parade of club safety vehicles. "The parade was organised to reflect on the wide scope of skills and experience that Dave had within motorsport," BRSCC chairman Peter Daly told MN.

"He was our Rescue Vehicle captain in the early days, all the marshals know of DP. The new rescue vehicle was a fitting tribute. [Club director] Glynn Lee and myself took the family round the circuit to show them the marshals standing trackside."

Pierre's funeral service takes place at Perry Barr Crematorium in Birmingham on Monday, July 5, at 1130hrs. There is a request for no flowers, but instead to send donations to Help For Heroes which you can do here: herofunds.helpforheroes.org.uk/In-Memory/David-Pierre.

THEY WERE ALL YELLOW...

Jack Brown and Ashley Marshall's Balfe Motorsport McLaren 570S GT4 had a new yellow look at last weekend's Silverstone 500 British GT championship blue-riband event. The livery reflects the partnership between XPEL, a protective films and coatings provider, and the paint protection film firm Lionshields that Brown runs alongside his driver mentor Callum Macleod, who is a British GT race winner. Silver Cup pair Brown, a Ferrari Challenge Europe Trofeo Pirelli Am runner-up, and Ginetta GT5 graduate Marshall are making their British GT debuts this year.

BRITISH STAR FOSTER TAKES SPA TREBLE

Up-and-coming British driver Louis Foster took a stunning three wins out of three in the recent Euroformula Open championship round at Spa-Francorchamps.

The 17-year-old with the results shot to second place in the standings 19 points shy of leader Cameron Das. The CryptoTower driver's treble included reversed-grid victory and overcoming a startline stall. He also claimed two fastest laps and his second pole of 2021.

Foster, son of British Touring Car Championship driver Nick, is a multiple British Formula 3 and Formula 4 race-winner and is undertaking his continental debut campaign in F3-based Euroformula before a planned switch to America.

"I thought this weekend would be very hard," Lord Wandsworth College student Foster said. "I thought I would have an edge on Cam, I believed I could be on pole and win races for sure, but I didn't think we were going to get the triple.

Brit teenager made it a treble

"The races are complicated with slipstreams, crashes, yellow flags and safety cars. It's quite a slipstream-heavy circuit. Having a win, or three wins, gives us momentum and confidence going into the next round. It makes us feel like we belong at the front."

NEATE JOINS ARGENTI'S BRITISH F4 ATTACK

Rising star Aiden Neate has joined the British Formula 4 ranks with Argenti Motorsport, starting at last weekend's Brands Hatch meeting.

Neate, who hit his 15th birthday last Friday, is the son of British Touring Car Championship driver Andy. Aiden has karting and French F4 experience, plus has clocked pre-season mileage with Argenti in the Mygale M14-F4.

His recruitment means the 19-car grid is British F4's largest since 2017's season finale at the same circuit plus that Argenti now has a category-maximum four-car line-up for the first time. Team boss Michael Meadows said: "Aiden is a serious talent and has produced some very impressive performances in testing, so we're ready to help him realise his full potential in the championship this year."

Neate is Argenti's fourth F4 driver

GINETTA HITS DOUBLE 250-RACE MILESTONE

Ginetta hit a double landmark at Brands Hatch's British Touring Car Championship meeting last weekend as the supporting Ginetta GT4 Supercup and Ginetta Junior championship both reached 250-race milestones.

The GT4 Supercup was launched in 2011 and its opening race last weekend was the 250th for both the championship and its Ginetta G55 model.

While the Ginetta Juniors coincidentally with its own Brands race one at the event hit the 250-race mark for the main championship since the Ginetta G40 was introduced in 2010.

The GT4 Supercup reaching the mark on the Brands Indy circuit was appropriate as the championship's first race was also at that track. The Juniors' alumni meanwhile includes Lando Norris, Jamie Chadwick and Tom Ingram.

Ginettas hit double milestone

Mansell 'had a ball' at Spa

BRITISH F3 RACER MANSELL STARS AT SPA

BRDC British Formula 3 racer Christian Mansell impressed on his recent surprise Euroformula Open debut at Spa-Francorchamps, claiming three top-six finishes with Carlin.

For the 16-year-old Australian – who won in his BRDC F3 debut meeting at Brands Hatch in May after a stunning move for the lead at Paddock – it was his first racing outside the UK or Australia. At Spa he finished fifth, fourth and sixth.

Mansell said: "It's been a really good learning weekend. The track is super-fast and it has been such a cool experience. Eau Rouge is such an insane corner and I've been having a ball.

"In qualifying I was still learning and could have extracted more from the car, but I was happy enough with finishing fifth on my first session. In the first race, the start itself was strong and the first lap was very hectic. I managed to get into the battle up front, and made a few little mistakes but had a lot of positives.

"I was super-happy with race two, battling for podiums in a car I was not 100% used to. The last race was tougher as we had decent pace towards the beginning, but it fell off near the end."

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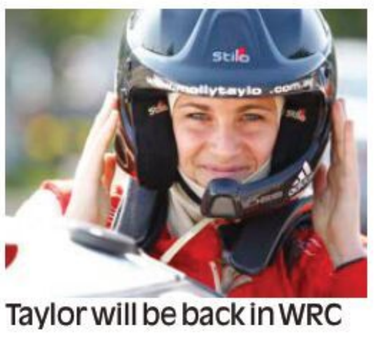
RALLY NEWS



Taylor will be back in WRC

THREE-EVENT PROGRAMME IN RALLY3 FOR TAYLOR

Extreme E driver Molly Taylor will return to the World Rally Championship after securing a three-event programme in a Ford Fiesta Rally3.

The Australian, 33, is set to tackle the gravel rounds in Estonia, Greece and Finland with backing from lubricant firm Wolf.

She will be reunited with British co-driver Seb Marshall, who partnered her in the European and World championships in the past.

A first test in the M-Sport Poland-built Fiesta is scheduled in Latvia on July 4 following the country's ERC counter, which finishes the previous day.

"We're getting the band back together," Taylor said of the rekindling of her partnership with Marshall and M-Sport, for whom she used to work.

GARROD'S PLANS FOR LIEPAJA SCUPPERED BY CORONAVIRUS

Welsh co-driver Darren Garrod will be a non-starter on Rally Liepaja from tomorrow (Friday) after his driver, Roland Poom, was forced to self-isolate.

Poom was identified as a close contact of somebody who tested positive for Covid-19 in Estonia and therefore has to remain in isolation for 10 days from June 24.

Although the Latvia event would have been only Poom's second start at European championship level, he had been tipped for a points finish in his Sainteloc Junior Team Citroen C3 Rally2.

Estonian Poom was also hoping to use the event to build his relationship with Garrod. The pairing is working together for the first time this year.

DEVINE DETERMINED TO BANISH BAD MEMORIES IN LATVIA

Callum Devine's Rally Liepaja entry marks the return to the scene of "the biggest accident of my life", according to the Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy driver.

Devine experienced mild concussion after the car-wrecking accident last August and makes his comeback fresh from scoring European championship points in Poland last month.

"I had the biggest accident of my life there last year, I wrecked the car," said Devine, who is now driving a Ford Fiesta Rally2 after he used a Hyundai i20 R5 in 2020. "I've been there before and I have learned the hard way. We need to evaluate, watch the onboards and suss it all out just a wee bit better. At least we're not going to Liepaja blind."

EVANS PLEDGES TO FIGHT BACK AFTER 'BASIC' ERROR ON SAFARI RALLY

Toyota Yaris star wants to regroup after losing a potential podium in Africa

Photos: Toyota Gazoo Racing, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Safari stages caught out the Welshman

WRC STANDINGS

After round 6/12

P	DRIVER	PTS
1	Sebastien Ogier (FRA)	133
2	Elfyn Evans (GBR)	99
3	Thierry Neuville (BEL)	77
4	Ott Tanak (EST)	69
5	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN)	66
6	Kalle Rovanpera (FIN)	56

By Graham Lister

Elfyn Evans is already focused on getting his World championship challenge back on track in Estonia later this month after his "fairly basic mistake" cost him a Safari Rally podium and left him trailing Sebastien Ogier by 34 points in the title fight.

Welshman Evans retired on the third stage of the Kenyan event after striking a rock in his Toyota Yaris WRC, while Ogier recovered after early delays to win for a fourth time this season.

But following a rally of frustration for Evans, which he completed in 10th position alongside co-driver Scott Martin, there was a glimmer of hope when he beat his team-mate through the event-closing powerstage with the third fastest time.

"It was a massive disappointment for our day to end so early," Evans said of his Friday exit. "I made a fairly basic mistake, to be honest, and I'm kicking myself for that. The stone was sticking out further than what I had marked in our pacenotes and we clipped it. On an event like this, you have to try and fix something if you can, but once I could inspect the damage I knew there was no chance to continue.

"It was disappointing to only come away with a few points after the error on Friday. But it was good to drive most of the stages and gain experience of this event for the future, and now we have to look forward and focus on Estonia."

Evans was left to rue lost chance

There was some Toyota-powered British success in Kenya, however, with Lancastrian co-driver Daniel Barritt partnering Takamoto Katsuta to the Japanese driver's best overall finish in second place.

Katsuta briefly led following Thierry Neuville's Sunday morning retirement but slipped behind Ogier with two stages remaining. Ogier admitted afterwards "it was not that easy to catch him at the end".

HYUNDAI BOSS ADAMO SAYS THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR DIRE FORM

Hyundai team boss Andrea Adamo said there's nothing to excuse his squad's miserable run of form after he presided over a fifth defeat this season to the rival Toyota team.

For the third event running, Hyundai lost out on winning due to mechanical failures with Thierry Neuville forced out while leading comfortably on the final morning.

Afterwards, Italian Adamo said: "This is the third rally in a row in which we have had problems, so it cannot be considered bad luck. There are no excuses, it simply should not happen. We have to understand what is going on. We have the same parts as we used last year, in events such as Turkey and Sardinia; we have improved the performance, but we are lacking in reliability, and we need to understand why. It's simply unacceptable."

Although the team's faltering 2021 campaign is not understood to be behind his departure, Hyundai has dispensed of its long-term team manager Alain Penasse amid reports that the Belgian's contract won't be renewed when it expires in the summer. Penasse joined Hyundai Motorsport in 2013.

Tanak was infuriated by the problems that afflicted his Hyundai i20 Coupe in Kenya

Breen is looking ahead to his WRC return in Estonia

BREEN CONFIDENT MILEAGE CAN HELP ESTONIAN BID

Craig Breen reckons his Rally Liepaja outing this weekend will help him to get ready for his World Rally Championship return in Estonia from July 15.

Latvia's round of the European championship uses on high-speed gravel stages, which Breen hopes will aid his Rally Estonian preparations as he gets set to take over Hyundai's third i20 Coupe WRC from Dani Sordo.

"Liepaja is a nice rally, I've won it before when it was a snow rally, I was good there last year as well," said Breen, who is competing in a Hyundai i20 R5 on MRF tyres.

"I enjoy it and it gets you into the mindset of going fast, which helps [for WRC].

"On the flipside then, driving without the aero is quite strange and it's going to be tricky with only a day's testing and then straight back into the world car afterwards.

"You have to get your mind clued back into having all that power again and all the aero. There's pros and cons but still it's enjoyable."

Breen retired from the European Rally Championship season-opening Rally Poland with broken suspension on the opening morning, but he returned on Saturday and clocked three stage wins with co-driver Paul Nagle.

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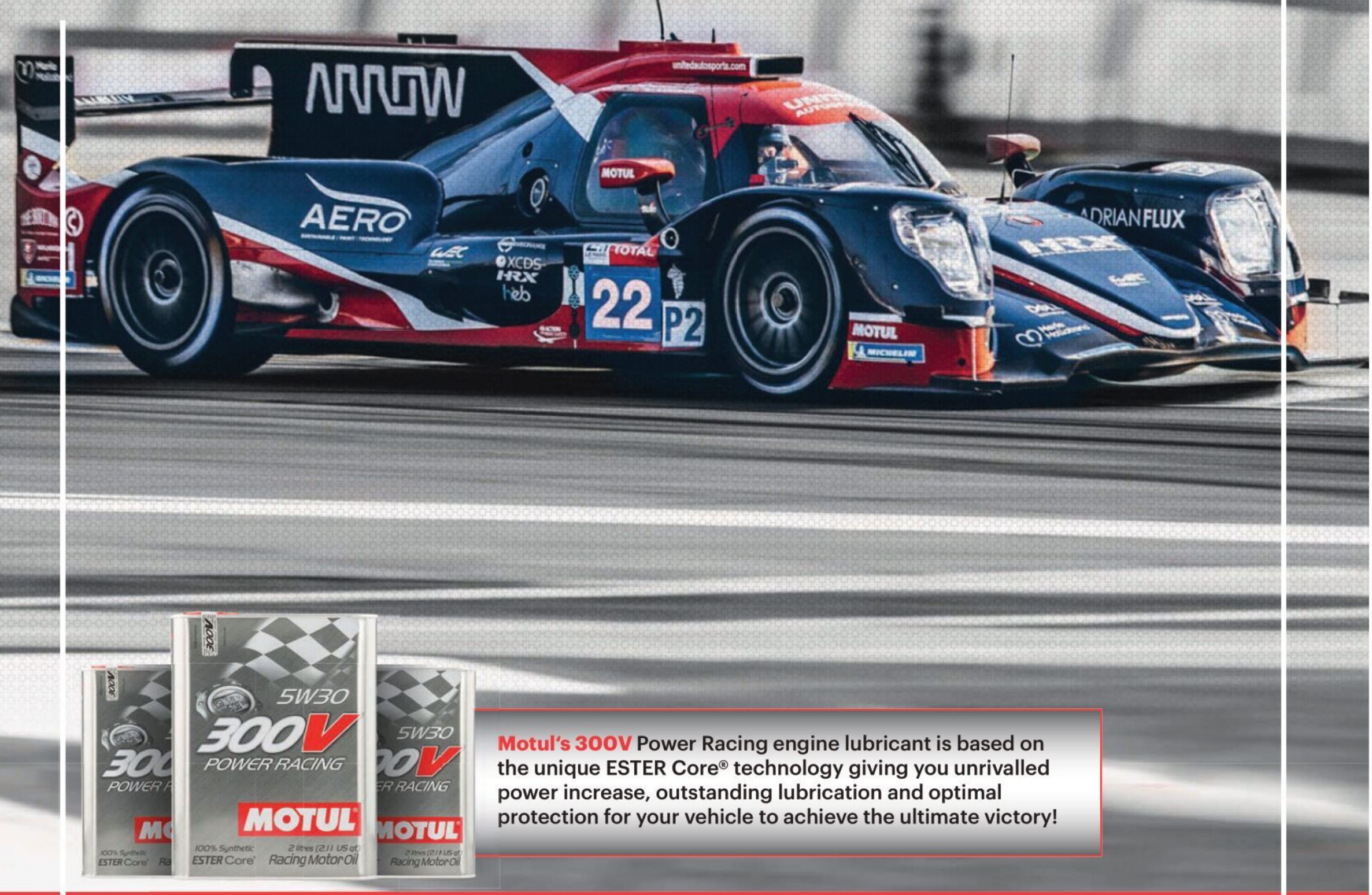

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RALLY NEWS

Greer: results led

GREER COY ON COMMITTING TO FULL NORTHERN IRISH SEASON

Despite opening the Northern Ireland Rally Championship season with a win, Jonny Greer is still not committing to the entire series saying his ongoing involvement in his new Citroen C3 R5 will be results led.

Greer romped to a comfortable 33.3-second victory on the Bishopscourt Stages ahead of eight-time champion Derek McGarrity. It was the first time he'd ever driven the C3 in competition and the inaugural appearance for the car on a UK or Irish national rally.

"Bishopscourt was a good day for us and the car was fantastic," Greer told MN. "We are still new to the car, so every mile is about learning a bit more and about how the car behaves and what works and what doesn't. A good start does make it more appealing to [commit], but things can change so fast in this sport so at the moment I still just want to take it one round at a time."

Greer however does believe the level of competition in the NI series is stronger than it's been for a while. He was one of five champions to enter round one while drivers like Desi Henry and Josh Moffett *(see separate story)* will also vie for honours.

"This year, the series looks in good shape, especially with a few champions competing, which is always good," said Greer. "I'm happy to see rallying in Northern Ireland in such good shape at the moment."

CRONIN RETURNS TO THE BRC WITH CAUTIOUS AMBITIONS

Four-time title winner is expecting to be rusty on his first rally in three years

Title-winner Cronin (r) is back

Photos: FIA ERC, Roy Dempster, M-Sport

Cronin will drive this Rally2 Fiesta

By Jason Craig

Keith Cronin will return to competition and the British Rally Championship on next week's Nicky Grist Stages but has ruled out challenging for a record-equalling fifth drivers' title.

Cronin – who hasn't appeared in the BRC since the 2018 Ypres Rally – will drive a Ford Fiesta Rally2 prepared by RLA Autosport and will have Mikie Galvin sitting alongside him. They will complete the rest of the BRC season bar the Mull Rally in early October for cost reasons.

"Winning the British Rally Championship again will be difficult on my first year back," Cronin told MN. "I need to try and get back on the pace because I don't expect to be near the guys at the front at the start – I'm definitely going back to the British Rally Championship with my eyes open.

"Three years is an awfully long time. I can't possibly be anywhere near the front [guys] – I'm not stupid – but I do believe I can get back on the pace. It is just going to take a while to do it.

"The new Fiesta has had a lot of development work performed on it, especially for UK roads, so it should be competitive," Cronin added. "The biggest thing for me is going to be time because I haven't been out in quite a while, so I know I have to be realistic about my chances this season.

"Hopefully, if we can work on a deal that is less last-minute for 2022, we can return next year and have a better go. For this year, if we can set some fast times and get a win or two then I'd be happy."

As a warm-up for the BRC, Cronin is taking part in the two-day M-Sport Stages this weekend. As well as learning about a new car, the four-time BRC title-winner is also looking to familiarise himself with the tyres supplied by his principal backer – Hankook.

"I've three aims at the M-Sport Stages," Cronin said. "To better understand how the tyres work; to find a set-up I'm happy with; and to get back into a rhythm because listening to pacenotes again is going to feel strange. I'm sure the event will help to remove 80% of the rust.

"The M-Sport Stages will give me some idea of how far off the pace I am – but having Mikie alongside me will help because he knows what I can do, and he can get me back on the pace."

JOSH MOFFETT AIMING FOR FIRST-EVER NORTHERN IRISH TITLE

Josh Moffett will dovetail his British Rally Championship commitments with a Northern Ireland Rally Championship title tilt from NI's round two in early August.

Moffett had hoped to secure a late entry for the recent Bishopscourt Stages Rally but was unsuccessful. He will instead begin his campaign on the Dogleap Stages with his Hyundai i20 R5.

"The rallies in the Northern Ireland Rally Championship are pretty much on my doorstep, the rounds are good and it's a proven competition," Moffett told MN. "If there was an Irish Tarmac Championship or a National Rally Championship in Ireland this year then things would be different, but there are no solid plans in place for either, so I have decided to look elsewhere."

Moffett – the younger brother of Sam who currently leads the BRC – will also make a second consecutive appearance at the M-Sport Stages this weekend in the family-owned Ford Fiesta World Rally Car.

"We can't use the Hyundai on that particular event, which is unfortunate, but doing it will maybe get us the pace back on the loose," said Moffett, who is in the process of sourcing a gravel kit for his i20 R5.

"I've never driven the Hyundai on gravel before. July's Nicky Grist Stages will be my first time, which is not the best start for us – it will be tough for us given the timeframe – but if we do our homework in the lead up to the next British Rally Championship round and get some testing in, it will definitely help.

"I think to begin with we will just use the gravel set-up Hyundai gives us and take it from there. It will either work well for us or we will have to work on it to the point that I'm happy and feel comfortable."

After the Nicky Grist Stages, Moffett will enter the RSAC Scottish Rally on July 24 with the Fiesta WRC, useful seat time ahead of the third BRC round which is also in Scotland on August 14.

Moffett will concentrate effort on rallies closer to home

Rhys Yates is hoping he can build on a strong start

YATES AIMING TO TRANSFER OULTON BRC PACE ONTO GRAVEL

After coming within a second of victory on the Neil Howard Stages, Rhys Yates is "confident" he can maintain that form on the next British Rally Championship round, the Nicky Grist Stages.

Asked whether he his near-miss at Oulton Park has left him with a score to settle on next weekend's event, Yates told MN: "It gives me confidence that we can win an event, we should've won that event. We've beat them before and can definitely try and battle them, and that's the plan. Nicky Grist will be difficult, but that doesn't mean to say I'm not confident in my driving at the minute. But you've got to be realistic," he added, "you're never going to take a second per kilometre out of the Welsh boys on gravel, you're just not going to do it. So if I can be up in the top three, consistently up there, fighting for stage wins and be in the mix, that's where I want to be."

Yates is one of several BRC runners to enter this weekend's M-Sport Stages as preparation for the Nicky Grist. Returning four-time champion Keith Cronin, Garry Jennings, Josh Moffett (albeit in a different car) and Seb Perez among others have entered both events too.

"The aim is to get a head start onto the Nicky Grist prep," Yates said of his M-Sport Stages ambitions. "I haven't been on gravel since the M-Sport Stages last year and that day I've never felt as fast or as comfortable on gravel. My main objective is to get that feeling back to start the prep for Nicky Grist."

The M-Sport Stages is a two-day affair with 36 stage miles on Saturday (July 3) before 22 more on Sunday, in Greystoke forest with no spectators. Matthew Wilson as number one seed is driving a Fiesta Rally3, giving the car its UK debut.

Photos: Extreme E, Paul Lawrence, Jakob Ebrey

Kristoffersson is relishing the chance to compete in an Audi

KRISTOFFERSSON AIMS FOR MORE WORLD RX GLORY AS HE JOINS CRACK EKS JC SQUAD

Three-time title winner wants to get to grips with Audi for fresh assault

By Hal Ridge

Swede Johan Kristoffersson, the most successful driver in the history of the World Rallycross Championship, has his sights set on a fourth crown in five years despite switching to a different team and car package for 2021.

Reigning World RX drivers' title-holder Kristoffersson has moved from his family-run KMS outfit to the EKS JC squad for the eighth running of the World RX series and will follow in his father Tommy's footsteps by racing an Audi at the discipline's highest level.

To date, Kristoffersson has only raced Volkswagens in the headline RX1 (Supercar) category since making his rallycross debut in 2013 but this year will move away from the works-built VW Motorsport Polo that he used to win his three drivers' crowns to an EKS-built Audi S1.

Under the KYB Team JC banner, JC Raceteknik won the World RX Teams' title last year, and for 2021 has amalgamated further with Mattias Ekstrom's EKS outfit. Ekstrom and EKS won both the drivers' and teams' crowns with a previous iteration of the S1 in 2016. Kristoffersson, who will partner Belgian Enzo Ide in the team, said: "I'm very pleased that I can contest a full World RX season, and to do so with a new team is like a new challenge for.

"EKS JC know how to win races and championships, and after our first two test days we saw that we could learn and gain from each other.

"The target when you enter a championship as the reigning champion is always to win it again, but that's certainly no easy task. We fully expect to have to fight hard, but we are ready for that and I really, really can't wait to get to the first event with my new car and see where we are at."

WILLIAMS TO USE RICHARD BURNS-STYLE PACENOTES

Tom Williams is looking forward to trying a new pacenote system on this weekend's M-Sport Stages which closely resembles that of his godfather and 2001 world champion Richard Burns.

Instead of using numbers to describe corners, Williams will use a descriptive system where corners are described rather than marked for severity and speed by numbers.

Williams told MN: "The numbers I was getting weren't adding up for me. I started doing descriptive now, no numbers at all which is the same as Richard. It makes a lot of sense and I'm going to see how this goes."

Williams has changed notes

Williams entered last year's M-Sport Stages so sees this year's rally as a great chance to benchmark his progression over the last year. Aside from new notes, he will drive a Fiesta Rally2 instead of R5.

"It'll be really cool to see the progression from last year, and hopefully I'm a bit quicker than last time," he said. "You rarely get it in rallying where you get something very like-for-like, so it's good for my development in the Rally2."

He will appear at the Goodwood Festival of Speed next weekend, but the rest of his season plans are yet to be confirmed. Williams added: "We have some interesting ideas, a bit different to everyone."

Plains rally has been axed for this season

PLAINS AND TYNESIDE CANCELLED

The Plains Rally and the Tyneside Stages were cancelled last week due to concerns over Covid-19.

In a statement issued last week, the Plains organiser Knutsford & District Motor Club said it has a "duty of care" and "social responsibility to the residents of the local community our event passes through" and therefore running the rally on August 14 would be unwise.

It was supposed to be the third round of the BTRDA and the second in the Welsh championship season. However a 2022 date of May 21 has been confirmed.

A statement said: "The organisers are concerned that as delta variant continues to spread, travel restrictions would lead to a loss of entries and marshals, since we will be respecting travel advice, we cannot expect others to ignore it."

Tyneside organisers Alnwick and Berwick District Motor Clubs meanwhile have cited expenditure "approaching five figures" that would need to be made in the next week as the eason for the event's cancellation. With no certainty over Covid guidelines and a diminishing timeline before the event's August 1 date, organisers felt cancelling was "the only sensible" decision.

MOTORSPORT NEWS Says...

There were more than a few concerned looks plastered across faces last Friday when the news broke that the Plains Rally and the Tyneside Rallies would not be running this year. We thought we'd evaded the dreaded Covid axe, but that couldn't be further from the truth. You have to respect the decision made and its timeliness, and we can only hope that future organising teams holding events later in the year don't have similar problems or concerns.

Kleinschmidt will continue as part of Abt Cupra XE team

KLEINSCHMIDT TO TEAM UP WITH EKSTROM IN EXTREME E

Former Dakar Rally winner Jutta Kleinschmidt has replaced German compatriot Claudia Hurtgen in the ABT Cupra XE team for the final three rounds of the Extreme E campaign.

Hurtgen raced in the opening round of the season in Saudi Arabi but the team crashed out. Originally one of two driver advisors to the XE series, 2001 Dakar Rally winner Kleinschmidt replaced Hurtgen in the ABT Cupra seat for the season round in round two in Senegal.

"I'm really looking forward to this new challenge, the preparation with the ABT team and of course to work with Mattias," said Kleinschmidt, who will partner World Rallycross champion Mattias Ekstrom.

Hurtgen has cited a busy schedule as the reason for being unable to continue. "Top performance in off-road events like Extreme E requires intensive preparation, including testing and rally participation, she said. "This high time commitment is unfortunately not compatible at the moment with my professional work at BMW, which I live for with the same passion."

The next round of XE takes place in Greenland at the end of August.

BRENNAN TO TACKLE CROSS CAR IN NEW FIA ACADEMY CONTEST

Irish driver Jack Brennan will represent Motorsport Ireland in the inaugural FIA Cross Car Academy Trophy series this year.

MSI has been selected as an ASN to put forward competitors for the new series and has selected teenager Brennan. The new international championship for drivers between 13 and 16 years of age will feature new FIA-specification Cross Car machines, powered by 75bhp engines.

The series will begin in France in mid-July, before it supports the German round of World RX at Nurburgring for a double-header in early August. Further rounds will be held in Czech Republic, Italy and Spain.

"I'm really looking forward to competing against the best young autocross drivers from across Europe and it'll be an honour to represent Ireland," said Brennan. "Hopefully we can get the campaign off to a good start in France and go from there."

Motorsport Ireland president John Naylor said: "Irish competitors have proven themselves internationally in many disciplines over the years but it's very exciting to have someone so young, involved in a brand-new FIA series."

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HISTORICS

DOWN THE WORKSHOP

JAGUAR E-TYPE '4 WPD'

Current owner: Shaun Lynn

Famous names raced this...

It is a famous E-type

The car registered '4 WPD' was the first of the lightweight Jaguar E-types built for racing by the Jaguar factory, using chassis 850006, and is one of the best known and most successful of the 12 lightweights built in period. The car started life carrying the 'BUY 1' plate and was one of the first E-types registered in April 1961 and was raced to third place by Roy Salvadori at Oulton Park in the model's debut race. It was owned and entered by John Coombs and was raced extensively.

It became '4 WPD'

Graham Hill, Dan Gurney and Jackie Stewart also raced the car, which was reworked over the winter of 1961/62 with the addition of aluminium panels, hardtop and some engine work. It was also re-registered as '4 WPD'.

It was the prototype lightweight

After a full season of racing in 1962, the car became the prototype lightweight E-type over the winter of 1962-63 and was the car on which all subsequent lightweights were based. The notable developments included a complete aluminium body and an aluminium block, dry-sump, fuel-injected engine.

It was sold to Charles Bridges

The car was busy through 1963 with the Coombs team and at the end of the season gained a ZF gearbox, wider wheels and arches. After a final season with Coombs in 1964, '4 WPD' was sold to Charles Bridges at Red Rose Racing where it was raced by Bridges, Brian Redman and Richard Bond.

It is now back in 1964 trim

More recently, '4 WPD' has been campaigned extensively in historic racing and has been a winner at Goodwood when Lynn shared the car with drivers like Dario Franchitti and Emanuele Pirro. Over the last winter, the car has been returned to the specification it ran at the end of 1964 when it left Jaguar's care. The work was done by marque expert CKL Developments under the guidance of Peter Wilson who looked after the car for Jaguar in period. It was shown to the public for the first time in its reworked trim at the recent E-type 60th anniversary celebration event at Shelsley Walsh.

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Pancisi drove Classic Le Mans-winning T35

FORMULA 2 PAIRING TACKLE VINTAGE RACING IN BUGATTIS

Wrigley and Pancisi enjoy recent Cadwell Park vintage debut outings

By Paul Lawrence

Historic Formula 2 racers Mike Wrigley and Nick Pancisi stepped back a generation to drive a pair of Bugatti T35s at Cadwell Park in their vintage racing debuts.

Wrigley, who raced in Formula 3 in the early 1970s, prompted the plan after acquiring a Crosthwaite and Gardiner-built replica T35 that was last raced in the US about 20 years ago. His friend Pancisi, meanwhile, ran a T35 to two finishes after Wrigley's car was sidelined after a water issue in qualifying.

"I'd never driven it until I drove it across the paddock this morning," said Wrigley. "I'd always wanted one and it's too nice to race really. It's very different to the Formula 2 and Group C cars I'm used to but it's good fun."

The T35 that Pancisi was driving has been a winner at Classic Le Mans in recent times and has an extensive racing history over the last 30 years. "I've only ever been to the shops in it and so this may be a one-off.

"It won't take over from Historic F2," added Pancisi, who hopes to have his ex-Ronnie Peterson March 722 back on track this summer after it was damaged at Oulton Park during the Gold Cup meeting last August.

"In motorbike terms, I'm just having a wobble round," said Pancisi of his two races at Cadwell Park. Both drivers were tempted to the VSCC meeting when Tim Dutton made a big effort to get a strong field of Bugattis for the Williams Trophy race.

North east of England fans will get to witness more than 70 cars

Lombard Rally Festival to run in front of fans

At a point when a number of rallies are having to prohibit spectators, fans in the north-east of England will be welcomed to the Lombard Rally Festival Newcastle at Brunton in Northumberland on Saturday.

The demonstration event will run on a three-mile special stage on the former airfield with a field of over 70 cars tackling the stage several times through the day and spectator admission is by advance booking only.

Star entries include Guy Wilks (Porsche 911), Louise Aitken-Walker (Ford Escort Mk2), Barry Lee (Ford Escort Mk2), local aces Richard Mawson (Ford Anglia) and David Henderson (Ford Escort Mk2) as well as three Metro 6R4s and a Ford RS200. An entry from Chris Ingram in a Ford Escort is also expected.

The event will conclude with a rally forum and display of cars in the nearly Bamburgh Castle in the evening.

Hill back in harness in Graham's Jaguar

Damon Hill recently drove the Jaguar E-type that his father Graham took to the model's first race win in April 1961 as part of the build up to the E-type 60th anniversary celebrations at the Silverstone Classic.

A pair of convertible road cars were prepared for Graham Hill and Roy Salvadori and Hill won the first race at Oulton Park in 'ECD 400'.

"It was a fantastic opportunity for me," said Damon. "In the Hill family we cherish the fact that Dad was the first guy to win a race in an E-type and I feel very, very privileged to take such a famous car for a spin."

Damon took Dad's E-type for spin

PALLISER RETURNS TO THE HILLS AFTER REBUILD

Back on the hills this season after a lockdown rebuild is the Palliser WDF3 chassis 2 in the hands of Sue Hayes. The Lotus twin-cam engined car was rebuilt last year by Sue's partner Chris Cannell and is thought to been run in Formula Atlantic or Formula B in its early life after starting out as a Formula Ford. The car had its first post-lockdown run at Gurston Down recently.

Vauxhall Magnum debuts at Yorkshire Festival

The Aston Martin z turbo-engined Vauxhall Magnum built and raced by John Pope in the 1970s made its public return during the Yorkshire Motorsport Festival over the weekend.

It was the car's first run in around 40 years and comes after a painstaking rebuild of the unique Super Saloon project by current owner Geoff Harris.

Pope built the car in 1974 with a standard 5.4-litre Aston Martin engine and later added two turbos to make it a 600bhp monster. He raced the car with some success for the rest of the decade before parking the project. Now Harris has rebuilt it for a return to competition.

IN BRIEF

Bob Rutherford

MN was very sad to learn of the death of historic rally organiser and sometime co-driver Bob Rutherford, 69, during a route recce for the HERO-ERA Classic Marathon in Spain. Rutherford lost his footing and fell to his death, despite the best efforts of his recce partner and close friend Guy Woodcock. Tributes to Rutherford have come from across the classic rallying fraternity.

Bailey's new Escort

Experienced race and rally driver Jerry Bailey has a freshly rebuilt Ford Escort Mk2 standing ready for the Roger Albert Clark Rally in November. His existing BDG-powered car was completely rebuilt for the 2020 Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand but has been stood unused since that event was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic.

Smith in a Ralt

Historic FF1600 and Classic F3 racer Paul Smith had a debut race in his F3 Ralt RT30 in the Jochen Rindt Trophy at Thruxton recently. Smith, who was waiting for a broken finger to heal before starting his season, plans to race the car in the new Geoff Lees Trophy for up to 2-litre 1980s single-seaters and intends to join the grid at Brands Hatch in July.

Maeers follows dad

Ben Maeers, son of fellow historic and vintage racer Justin, has stepped up to HGPCA races this season in a Cooper T51. Ben, 25, has been racing for six years now, notably in a Morgan three-wheeler, the RIP Special and the 6-litre Parker GN. Justin and Ben shared the 1921 Parker to a famous win at this year's Donington Historic Festival and Ben has now joined the HGPCA grid in the 1960 Cooper.

Rogers Trophy

Race promoter James Beckett is hoping to attract some Classic and Historic Formula Ford 1600s to join the grid for the inaugural Peter Rogers Trophy on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit on Friday July 9. The period Formula Fords are racing on the GP circuit over the weekend but could join more modern FF1600s for Friday's race as well.

Harrison's new car

Historic Mini race and rally driver Andy Harrison had added the famous ex-Steve Entwistle 'orange box' Mini to his stable and will be using it in classic and historic rallies. Harrison's first major event in the well-known Mini will be the Lombard RAC Rally Bradford event around his local town's Bowling Park on Saturday July 24.

RALLY REPORTS

SCOTTISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP: ARGYLL STAGES BY JOHN FIFE — JUNE 25-26

EVANS AND JACKSON COME OUT TOPS AS SCOTTISH RALLYING STRIKES BACK

Penalties might have clouded the final results, but a bumper entry enjoyed the competitive return

Photos: Eddie Kelly

Evans went on a late charge

Meirion Evans and Jonathan Jackson scored their maiden rally victory when they won the weekend's Argyll Rally. Unfortunately, they were unable to celebrate in traditional style as queries were raised when results were declared provisional.

On stage times alone, Freddie Milne and Patrick Walsh were holding the lead as they clocked in to the Final Control, but they faced a one-minute penalty for hitting a chicane.

Still, that did not detract from an event hailed by everyone as pretty spectacular on roads which are more than a match for any other closed-road event in the British Isles, Northern and the Republic of Ireland and including the Isle of Man.

Runner-up Daniel Harper summed it up best when he declared after the recce: "These roads have a bit of Mull, the Jim Clark and Ireland in them!"

The rally itself got under way on the Friday evening as the harsh staccato bark of a Volkswagen Golf GTI R5 echoed menacingly off the tall, tightly packed High Street buildings in the very heart of Dunoon. Encouragingly and perhaps worryingly (for Covid reasons) the spectacle had attracted huge crowds although most folk seemed quite sensible.

These short stages were designed more for public entertainment than competition, but they had bite. Ask John Stone: he shattered two of his Ford Fiesta's four wheels on a rather stout kerb.

Although night time comes late in this part of Scotland, dusk was starting to fall and light pods were fitted for the first three closed-road runs before the overnight halt.

Milne made his intent plain, the Ford Fiesta R5 driver fastest on all three stages. At the end of five stages, Harper and Chris Campbell were 18 seconds adrift in the Mini WRC with David Wright and Paula Swinscoe just two more seconds behind in their Ford Fiesta R5.

The remarkable Ford Escort Mk2 of David Bogie and John Rowan was fourth ahead of Hugh Hunter and Paul Beatson in the Ford Focus WRC with Evans and Jackson sixth in the VW Polo R5.

One of the first retirements was posted by Garry Pearson. Apparently, a faulty oil pressure valve blew the filter off and the Fiesta blew out its oil all over the windscreen. And then came the first inkling of trouble: Melvyn Evans was penalised a minute for hitting a chicane in SS4, so he promptly put the Fabia R5 on the trailer.

Saturday dawned bright. Milne took up where he left off, but Wright was the quicker of the two over the four morning tests before Merion Evans finally got to grips with the Polo and the timing screens started to light up as these three were joined by Harper, John MacCrone, Jock Armstrong, Hugh Hunter and a mighty impressive Damien Toner in his Escort Mk2.

As for Bogie, the Escort was well off the road in Glendaruel after hitting a bump, landing on the grass and executing a frisbee impression. Hunter wasn't far behind, but it was an intermittent misfire that halted the Focus and John Wink planted his Hyundai in the undergrowth.

After service, the crews faced the same four stages and the competition was getting ever fiercer. It was Gordon Morrison this time who demonstrated the outcome of a landing beyond a jump that wasn't inch perfect, the Ford Fiesta ending up in a ditch among the bushes.

Meanwhile Meirion Evans had looked at the gap between himself and the leader but given the twisty, bumpy nature of the tests there was only one where he could really make up time, and that was the five-mile shore-side Loch Fyne test. The trouble was, Milne and Wright were up for the fight too and although they were slightly quicker over Glendaruel and Bealach, Evans responded with a quicker time by 7s over the penultimate test.

It wasn't enough, Milne had an impressive 17s over Evans and Harper with Wright taking fourth. First time out in an R5 car, Armstrong improved throughout the rally to take fifth ahead of John MacCrone and Stuart Loudon, still getting used to the Skoda Fabia after their Ford Fiesta.

Gareth Sayers was seventh in his Fiesta R5 ahead of one of the drives of the rally, Toner in his Escort. It was his first visit to a Scottish event. He said: "It was a pity about David (Bogie), I'd like to have seen how I would have got on against him."

Aiden Wray was ninth in his Ford Fiesta R5 while Richard Hill rounded off the top 10 in his Mitsubishi Lancer having earlier lost time with a puncture in SS7 and soft tyre in SS8.

Then the realisation sunk in that the chicane-hitting penalties stood. This meant that Evans scored his maiden win as Milne got docked a minute and dropped to third behind Harper.

Freddie Milne thought he had done enough

Riddicks cured handling woe for class spoils

RESULTS

Argyll Rally
Scottish Rally Championship
When: June 25-26 Where: Dunoon

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Meirion Evans/Jonathan Jackson	VW Polo GTI R5	52m29s
2	Daniel Harper/Chris Campbell	Mini JCW WRC	+20s
3	Freddie Milne/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta R5	+43s
4	David Wright/Paula Swinscoe	Ford Fiesta R5 Evo2	+1m03s
5	Jock Armstrong/Cameron Fair	Ford Fiesta R5	+1m29s
6	John MacCrone/Stuart Loudon	Skoda Fabia R5	+2m31s
7	Gareth Sayers/Gareth Gilchrist	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m41s
8	Damian Toner/Denver Rafferty	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m51s
9	Aidan Wray/Kieran McGrath	Ford Fiesta R5	+3m55s
10	Richard Hill/Steffan Evans	Mitsubishi Lancer	+4m20s

Class winners: Innes Mochrie/Kirsty Mochrie (Rover Metro GTi); Keith Riddick/Mairi Riddick (MG ZR); Anthony McCann/Damian McCann (Ford Escort Mk2); Will Rowlands/Richard Birch (Ford Escort Mk2); Ewan Tindall/Andrew Roughead (Ford Fiesta R2T); Stephen Thompson/Larry Higton (Ford Escort Mk2); Toner/Rafferty; Niall Devine/Joe McNulty (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); Hill/Evans; Evans/Jackson.

Class winner Damian Toner was one of the stars of the show in his Ford Escort Mk2

Brother-and-sister crew is the star of the show in the classes in Scotland

The best fight of the day was in the two-wheel-drive 1650cc class where brother-and-sister team Mike and Mairi Riddick beat Ross Wasson and Liam McMullan by two seconds.

Riddick's MG ZR was handling woefully on the Friday night and finished the five stages 25 seconds behind Wasson with Des Campbell and Craig Forsyth between them. Having sorted out the car Riddick set about the task of hauling in the opposition, first closing on and then passing Campbell's Peugeot 206 and then closing in on the Honda Civic of Wasson.

Innes and Kirsty Mochrie had an easier time winning the 1450cc Class in their Rover Metro by over six minutes from the Nissan Micra of Mark Simpson and Julian Floyd.

Ewan Tindall, with Andrew Roughhead, impressed with Class 6 victory in his Fiesta R2T after Josh Evans retired his Renault Clio with no drive. Nathan Evans and Rhys Edwards were second in another Renault Clio.

Stephen Thomson, with Larry Higton, was the best of the two-litre rear-wheel-drive cars in Class 7 ahead of Mark McCulloch/Michael Hendry.

In the bigger RWD class, Damien Toner clinched the class win with his top-10 overall finish ahead of Ross Brusby and Sam Colls. Niall Devine and Joe McNulty were the Class 9 winners in their Mitsubishi Lancer E9 ahead the of the Subaru Imprezas of Ian Baumgart/Dave Robson and Michael Renton/John Shepheard that finished the rally just 1s apart.

Richard Hill/ Steffan Evans's top-10 result was good enough to clinch Class 10, but by only 5s from the Mitsubishi Lancer E10 of Wayne Sisson and Tom Woodburn.

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

REMARKABLE OGIER COMES OUT TOPS IN A MODERN-DAY WORLD RALLYING CLASSIC

The World champion sweeps the road and then stretches his legs in Africa. By Nick Garton

World champion is turning the title screw

Ogier kicked up a storm with a perfect weekend

Sebastien Ogier clinched his fourth victory from six events so far in 2021, and the Toyota team's fourth 1-2 result, making yet another entry in the sport's history books upon the World Rally Championship's return to Kenya's Safari Rally after a 19-year hiatus.

The rally may have been shorter, consisting of just 320km in terms of competitive stages (compared to 1010km in 2002 and 4800km when it was first staged in 1953), but the event's tradition for delivering twists and turns on the final day was much in evidence.

Dominant leader throughout the majority of the event was the Hyundai of Thierry Neuville, for whom many viewed the Kenyan adventure as the make-or-break event in his bid for this year's drivers' World championship race.

The Belgian ace has managed enviable consistency in 2021 alongside co-driver Martijn Wydaeghe, but the duo had yet to mount a challenge for victory and set about the stages with controlled aggression then benefitted from heavy rain to lead by 57.4 seconds at the end of the penultimate day.

In Neuville's wake, the Safari showed its traditional, attritional nature as the top two classes were decimated through the first full day on Friday. First to fall was much-hyped youngster Oliver Solberg in Hyundai's second-string entry, who tore the right rear corner off his car on the day's opening stage.

RESULTS

World Rally Championship round 6/12
Event: Safari Rally Kenya Where: Naivasha, Kenya When: June 23-27

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Sebastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia	Toyota Yaris WRC	3h18m11.3s
2	Takamoto Katsuta/Daniel Barritt	Toyota Yaris WRC	+21.8s
3	Ott Tanak/Martin Jarveoja	Hyundai i20 Couple WRC	+1m09.5s
4	Gus Greensmith/Chris Patterson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+1m54.6s
5	Adrien Fourmaux/Renaud Jamoul	Ford Fiesta WRC	+1m54.7s
6	Kalle Rovanpera/Jonne Hulttunen	Toyota Yaris WRC	+10m53.4s
7	Onkar Rai/Drew Sturrock	VW Polo GTI R5	+29m26.4s
8	Karan Patel/Tauseef Khan	Ford Fiesta R5	+33m30.4s
9	Carl Tundo/Tom Jessop	VW Polo GTI R5	+36m40,7s
10	Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin	Toyota Yaris WRC	+49m22.7s

Championship: 1 Ogier 133; 2 Evans 99; 3 Neuville 77; 4 Tanak 69; 5 Katsuta 66; 6 Rovanpera 56.

Dani Sordo was lucky to walk away from a high-speed off on SS4

British title hope Elfyn Evans followed him out after striking a rock within sight of the finish of SS3. The Welshman and co-driver Scott Marshall were sure that they had noted it on the recce, but the errant boulder appeared to be a little further out than they remembered.

Meanwhile, Dani Sordo's Hyundai suffered a high speed off on SS4 when the left front suspension collapsed, locking his steering and giving the Spaniard and co-driver Borja Rozada a few uncomfortable moments as their car threatened to roll. Mercifully, it stayed upright.

With most of the WRC2 regulars electing to skip the event, Czech veteran Martin Prokop was set fair to enjoy a run to glory in M-Sport's Rally2 Fiesta as the sole contender in the class. But he crashed out on SS5, so that was that.

Throughout this early carnage, Neuville's closest challenger on Friday was the Toyota of erstwhile championship leader Kalle Rovanpera, another man who needed a strong performance to shore up his season.

Rovanpera took the lead on SS5 only for Neuville to snatch it straight back, then the young Finn went out on the final stage of the day after falling foul of the sandy 'fesh-fesh' through which the field had to plough in many of the more technical sections of the day.

Sand came up and over the bonnet and through the vents, blinding Rovanpera sufficiently for him to plough off the road into such a pit of fesh-fesh that he had to be hauled out by officials.

All of this excitement left Neuville out in front despite a puncture and a mysterious misfire, with Toyota's Japanese protege Takamoto Katsuta in a career-best second place and Ott Tanak adding to Hyundai's good cheer in third.

The Estonian arrived in Africa with only a slender chance of getting himself back into the drivers' title race after two consecutive rear suspension collapses while leading on the previous two events in Portugal and Sardinia.

Tanak's early charge was plagued by rocks that were placed by rally officials after the crews had completed their recce in order to limit the amount of corner cutting, plus a recurrence of Hyundai's other bugbear: his engine stalling whenever he went near the handbrake.

"So what's happening, guys?" he snarled at his team, directly into the camera on the world TV feed.

Despite these troubles, the podium order remained unchanged until a downpour of epic proportions hit SS13, the final stage of the day, in which Tanak's screen demister refused to work, costing two minutes.

"It's amazing! The quality's amazing!" he glowered, powerless to stop Ogier from gliding past: the apex predator on the savannah.

The Frenchman had once again driven a relentless opening day as road sweeper, although the deep, sandy fesh-fesh had in fact worked in his favour as each car that followed wore grooves that saw them skimming along on the sump guard.

Friday's dramas had left him in fourth, despite breaking his rear suspension before the service, and crucially he kept his allocation of eight soft compound Pirellis in the best shape possible.

Tanak's Saturday misery left Ogier in third, 18.1s behind Katsuta at the start of the final day but tellingly he was able to fit four soft tyres to the mix of softs and hards that his team-mate was forced to juggle. Then suddenly it was a Toyota 1-2.

The rain on Saturday had been kind to Neuville, building his lead to almost a minute. Then on Sunday's first stage his i20 listed to starboard as the rear corner parted company. He dragged it through to the finish and, such was his lead, he still held an 11s advantage over Katsuta but

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Neuville had nearly one minute in hand before problems struck his Hyundai I20 Coupe – yet again

Elfyn Evans was left to regret a costly mistake that forced him to rejoin the event under Super Rally

there was no way to repair the damage.

For the third rally in a row, Hyundai team principal Andrea Adamo saw one of his cars leading handsomely only to park up with its rear wheel adrift. "It means we are doing something wrong," he said.

With Katsuta leading, the only question was whether Toyota might enforce team orders to have not only a Japanese car but also a Japanese driver take victory on the motorsport event that means more to their national automotive industry than any other.

Ogier hardly needed the extra points, but no orders were issued and his soft rubber duly carried him to victory.

Flanked by Masai warriors, the winner was generous in his praise for Katsuta and the local fans, who had roared the field on throughout all four days. "It's been an amazing experience… it might be a bit shorter in terms of kilometres but the challenge is still very tough."

RAI DEDICATES HIS WRC3 VICTORY TO INJURED BROTHER

WRC3 became a major focus of interest in Kenya, fuelled by a healthy contingent of local stars and the presence of Poland's 91-year-old triple European rally champion, Sobieslaw Zasada, becoming the oldest WRC runner in history.

Unfortunately Zasada was unable to finish when he got stuck in the sand.

A trio of VW Polos entered for veteran Carl Tundo and brothers Onkar and Tejveer Rai were expected to make the running in the category and duly delivered.

However a pall was cast over proceedings on Friday morning after Tejveer Rai, currently the leader of the Kenyan national rally championship, took a yump at full throttle and flew his VW more than 20 metres, landing nose-down before being launched into a violent crash.

Rai: winner, but no smiles

Although he and Zimbabwean co-driver Gareth Dawe initially appeared conscious, Rai was later airlifted to hospital in Nairobi; leaving brother Onkar to win and dedicate his success to his brother.

"I hope he is watching, this is for him," said Rai.

FOURMAUX'S STAGE WIN BRINGS MORE M-SPORT JOY

M-Sport delivered a sizeable customer presence on the Safari Rally, a landmark event in Ford's rally history, crowned by a season's-best performance from its own WRC youngsters Gus Greensmith and Adrien Fourmaux to finish fourth and fifth overall.

Greensmith, co-driven by Chris Patterson, held sway for much of the event despite transmission issues, which cost him a time penalty to fix in service. The Mancunian also used up his allocation of eight soft compound tyres faster than he wished, leaving him with only hard compound rubber for the decisive final day.

Fourmaux enjoyed his second gravel outing in a WRC car immensely despite lagging behind his team-mate early on, and relished a brief skirmish with his idol Ogier at the mid-point of the rally.

It was clear that the younger Frenchman was keen to record his first ever stage win, cheekily Tweeting Ogier after being pipped by 4.2s on SS9 to suggest that the senior man might consider letting one opportunity slip.

In the end Fourmaux needed no help at all to win Sunday's third stage and was second fastest – to Ogier again – on SS17. On the road he finished fourth overall, 9.9s ahead of Greensmith, but was later penalised for cutting a corner on SS14 and handed a 10s penalty, switching their final positions.

Team principal Richard Millener was delighted. "Adrien scoring his first overall stage win is not only a huge thing for him, but also the team," he said. "I hope they enjoy their last night in fabulous Kenya!"

A stage win for Fourmaux cemented his WRC progress

CAMPBELL HAILS VOLUNTEERS WHO RECREATED THE LEGEND

A year later than planned due to the coronavirus pandemic, returning the Safari Rally to the World Rally Championship schedule delivered a triumph for the Kenyan organisers, the FIA and the series as a whole.

Among the event team were several familiar faces from Britain, led by Motorsport UK rally manager, Iain Campbell.

"We've had a full team out here from the UK helping the organisers of the event in every way possible in preparation for 2020, initially, right the way through to a successful conclusion this weekend," Campbell said.

"It's been done on a volunteer basis for several of them, coming out here for 10 days, knowing that they will have to spend another 10 days in a quarantine hotel when they return to the UK.

"That's pretty much all of their annual holiday used up for which we are incredibly grateful."

Huge crowds turned out to witness the return of elite motorsport to Africa for the first time since 2002, producing a thunderous chorus of approval for almost every car throughout the day.

Despite the volume of spectators, very few issues were reported, although Elfyn Evans was a little unnerved by seeing a car full of fans driving parallel with him on a live stage.

Some reservations were expressed by crews over the fesh-fesh [dusty sand] and the volumes of zebra and giraffes roaming the stages, but such details will be chewed over in the light of a hugely successful return for the WRC's fabled African adventure.

"There were so many highlights every day, with crowds the size of which we haven't seen almost since the Group B era," said Campbell.

"The defining moment for me was when the first car went into shakedown. After a year like we have seen, the Safari Rally really was back. It was very special."

Some of the local wildlife turned out to watch the classic

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BRITISH GT REPORT: SILVERSTONE

IN BRIEF

Keen for improvement

You may be wondering about the conspicuous absence in the race report of the opening round's winners Phil Keen and Michael Igoe. Their WPI Lamborghini was mysteriously off the pace all weekend at Silverstone, being especially difficult on turn-in. The team was still scratching its collective heads after the race, in which Keen and Igoe could only salvage 11th place. "Obviously there's an issue somewhere, this is the first time [in my career] where we genuinely are just lost," Keen told MN.

Adam's adventure

Jonny Adam with Andrew Howard in the Beechdean Aston Martin was another Brands Hatch frontrunner reduced to a Silverstone supporting role, finishing sixth and not helped by being tapped into a spin by Marcus Clutton's Enduro McLaren at mid-distance. "The wheel is pretty damaged," Adam told MN, "I don't know how it's still inflated. We just lacked a little bit of pace. We went a little bit different on strategy to hope that rain was to come – but it never!"

Iribe's flash in pan

2 Seas wasn't GT3's only potent race-by-race entry at Silverstone as Brendan Iribe, forming his prolific driver pairing with Ollie Millroy in an Inception-bannered Optimum McLaren, rose to second early on before colliding with Dave Whitmore's GT4 Mercedes. "It's still a learning curve for him [Iribe], mixing it with GT4 cars," team boss Shaun Goff explained to MN. "He should have given a bit more room. Nothing the GT4 car did wrong. [Iribe] put his hands up."

Barwell bash

There were no hard feelings from Dennis Lind at his Barwell team-mate Sandy Mitchell getting the better of him for second place at the race's last. "When you're racing your team-mate you want to not lose but you don't want to be too rough," Lind told MN. "In the end I had no tyres left. We had a bit of contact but I'd lost the car and then I hit him. It made for great TV but inside the cars it was a little bit too exciting!"

Collard's BoP woe

Jordan Collard in his Team Rocket RJN GT4 entry was one of many McLaren runners feeling restricted by their Balance of Performance at Silverstone. "We're fighting a bit of an uphill battle," he told MN. "Damage limitation more than anything else this weekend. When we're three seconds off pole it's demoralising. We're getting the harsh end of the stick. I'm a little worried as this is a McLaren-suited track."

Collard: feeling BoP'ed

2 Seas' Merc had dominant debut

Abbott (l) and Kodric toast win

SILVERSTONE 500 DELIVERS THE SHOCK OF THE NEW

Fresh 2 Seas Mercedes and Newbridge Aston Martin efforts claimed the victories in British GT's showpiece. By Graham Keilloh

For various reasons, British GT is rarely predictable. Yet in last weekend's Silverstone 500 it went some way to surpassing itself. Both the GT3 and GT4 contests were won by an entry that wasn't even present in preceding Brands Hatch season-opener a month ago, and the winners more broadly had a lot new about them.

This three-hour race, as British GT's blue-riband event, tends to attract one-off entries. This one was no different, and a few of them looked like they could be competitive. Not least, as it turned out, the new Mercedes entered by 2 Seas.

The team raced two McLarens in British GT last season and showed potential, and having missed this year's opening British GT round this was the team's first outing after switching to Mercedes. And it blitzed the field first time out, with it becoming British GT's first race-by-race entry outright winner since 2015.

With a strong Pro-Am driver partnership of Martin Kodric and Hunter Abbott, it sent a shockwave through the paddock in Silverstone's qualifying as Abbott topped the 'Am' driver segment by over half a second. Then in the 'Pro' part Kodric was even further clear of his rivals, by 0.7 seconds. It added up to a comfortable pole.

Abbott's race-opening stint continued the theme, as he stroked 10s clear in 11 laps. But the 2 Seas Merc did get a challenge, and from a source that was in its own way unlikely.

By their own admission neither of Barwell pair Dennis Lind nor Leo Machitski maximised qualifying, and their Lamborghini started eighth. To compound matters Machitski spun wildly at Abbey on lap one, somehow avoiding rivals and barriers, and resumed at the tail of the GT3 field.

"We're relatively gentle on the tyre, but the downfall of that is it takes quite a fair bit in the first two laps to get them up to temperature," Machitski explained. "And the track temperature was low, [I] came round the corner and the back end stepped out and couldn't catch it. Then I got my head down. I knew the only person to blame was me and I had to push."

We could recall the Lind/Machitski Lamborghini's stellar race pace from Brands and they showed it again at Silverstone. Machitski got the car back into contention then an aggressive undercut getting 'Pro' Lind behind the wheel early vaulted the Lambo into the 2 Seas Merc's vicinity. And it looked like it could even have the legs of it.

The Barwell car's momentum was checked though by its 10s success penalty at its final stop, which left it 18s to make up on the 2 Seas Merc with just under an hour left. Lind trimmed the gap to Kodric to around 7s, but there it hovered, and then Lind late on instead had to think about his mirrors as his more freshly-booted Barwell team-mate Sandy Mitchell got onto his tail.

They diced as the laps ticked down, then on the final lap Mitchell got by in a thrilling move, attacking Lind on the outside of Stowe – including squeezing breathtakingly between his stablemate and Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke's BMW – to claim the inside line for Vale.

Mitchell and co-driver Adam Balon were the winners from the points angle too, as Kodric and Abbott did not score as a race-by-race entry. Yet Lind and Machitski with the result move to the top of the championship table.

Kodric insisted the 2 Seas win wasn't a surprise. "We've done a lot of preparation prior to this event," he total Motorsport News. "The guys have done a awesome job, the whole crew. That's why they didn't rush the new season with the car, they've done some work with it. Hard work ultimately shows and it showed this race.

> **"Hard work shows; we are where we should be"**
>
> **Martin Kodric**

"Today the guys [rivals] were really challenging us and we had to do everything perfect to stay ahead and have a gap. I can't say it wasn't expected: you always want to win and we knew had a competitive pairing and team. We are where we should be really."

The 2 Seas team's plans for the rest of 2021, for British GT and elsewhere, have not yet been confirmed. But on the evidence of Silverstone it'll be successful.

The GT4 contest was also won by a new entry, though it included a familiar face in multiple Le Mans winner Darren Turner who joined Matt Topham in racing a Newbridge Motorsport Aston Martin. The team was starting its first full-time British GT effort and Topham was making his British GT debut. A less likely novelty was that it also was Turner's first British GT win.

Turner said they came in with no

Mitchell's late P2 pass thrilled

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

BRITISH F3 REPORT BY MARK PAULSON

USHIJIMA CONFIRMS BRDC F3 TITLE-CONTENDER STATUS WITH SILVERSTONE DOMINATION

Two pole positions and two race wins at Silverstone were Reece Ushijima's perfect riposte to any doubters that the Hitech GP man is a real contender for this year's BRDC British Formula 3 crown. Pre-season favourite Ayrton Simmons salvaged a reversed-grid win after a character-building weekend, while table-topper Zak O'Sullivan continued his strong form with a pair of podiums.

Ushijima was never headed in the opening two races, twice leading O'Sullivan into Copse and withstanding the Carlin driver's pressure. The leading pair might have been challenged more by Ushijima's team-mate Bart Horsten in Saturday's opener if he'd cleared Frederick Lubin sooner. The second-row starters diced for several corners before Horsten completed the move at Village, with Javier Sagrera and Roberto Faria following through.

Multiple track-limits violations meant Horsten in qualifying recorded only one representative lap time, so he ran a full set of new tyres to maximise his chances in the opening race. The Australian set a string of fastest laps but the initial three-second deficit was too much. The order of the top five remained static while Lubin dropped to the back after pitting to remove grass from his radiators.

Lubin suffered another difficult first lap in Sunday morning's race two, which he started from second ahead of O'Sullivan. He dropped to fifth before passing Christian Mansell around the outside at Copse, then shadowed Fortec driver Faria as they closed down O'Sullivan who was suffering with graining. Sagrera then Horsten, from 15th on the grid, completed the top six.

Simmons had struggled with persistent understeer, possibly a legacy of hidden damage from his accident at the Brands Hatch season-opener, and could only qualify 14th and 16th then climb to 10th in both of the opening two races. Chris Dittmann Racing changed the entire rear end of the car after qualifying and worked into the night on Saturday looking for issues.

After further set-up work, and with a car he was finally more comfortable in, Simmons was able to take advantage of starting fourth in the reversed-grid finale. He followed team-mate Max Marzorati around polesitter Reema Juffali at Becketts then dived inside Marzorati at Brooklands a lap later to take the lead. Making a perfect restart after a mid-race safety car, Simmons was delighted to reward the team's efforts with his second win of the season.

"They've worked incredibly hard all weekend trying to get round the problem," he said. "I think the main issue was probably the tub [which] you're not allowed to swap during the weekend."

Hitech's Ushijima shot into British F3 title contention

Alex Connor inherited second – his and Arden's maiden podium – after a clash with Bryce Aron ended Marzorati's race, while third place for Faria completed a strong weekend that lifts him to third in the standings. The Brazilian however is over 50 points behind O'Sullivan and Ushijima, who survived some feisty race-three scraps on their way to ninth and 10th respectively. Juffali claimed her best finish of fourth, while Horsten clashed with Mikkel Grundtvig, earning a five-place grid penalty for the next round at Donington Park.

Ushijima's success means that he now heads to the East Midlands brimming with confidence. "The first one's [win] the hardest so I'm glad to get it out the way," he said. "The team and I have worked really, really, hard. A lot of hours but I'm glad we have something to show for it, and can try to carry this momentum into Donington. I heard at the beginning of the season that no-one really counted me in it. If we just keep doing what we did this weekend then it should be all right."

Barwell #63 got with 2 Seas Merc

expectations, and the pair qualified fourth. Then they converted a rapid and fault-free race to victory.

"The momentum's been with us since FP1," Turner told MN. "Great job by Newbridge, [and] in particular Matt. He's just chipped away at it and he raced really well. He was in the thick of it in that first stint. He should be really proud of his first weekend in British GT.

"We had a good car under us and Matt's performance was way above what I was expecting. If the Am driver is putting in really strong lap times, more importantly not making mistakes [it is good]. In my eyes he did the perfect weekend."

The Steller Audi duo Richard Williams and Sennan Fielding led from pole and tried an unorthodox front-loaded strategy seeking to overcome that as aSilver Cup pair they add 14s to their driver-change pitstops. They just came up short, finishing only 3.3s shy of the victorious Aston.

"Mixed emotions to be honest," Williams said. "It's disappointing to finish second, it was never going to be easy [as a] Silver-Silver pair in a race over that distance. The time gain that the Pro-Am pairings get is significant. The car was absolutely faultless all weekend.

"We had to try something different [on strategy]. That was the best option for us to get to the end quickest."

Fielding added: "Me and the Aston at the end it was nose-to-tail. It was a very close and exciting race, a lot of emotions going on all the way through!"

SUPPORT RACES

As they had done at Thruxton and Brands Hatch, Josh Steed of Xentek Motorsport and John Bennett of Elite Motorsport shared the Ginetta GT5 Challenge race wins at Silverstone. Steed claimed the opener after on-the-road winner Will Aspin was penalised for overtaking just after yellow flags had been shown for a safety car. That dropped Aspin back behind Steed and impressive rookie Ben McKenna, brother of GT5 champion and current British GT racer Scott. McKenna, who had qualified third, exchanged the lead with Aspin before the squabble allowed Steed to catch and pass both. A lack of green flags – as another car had stopped in a dangerous position – when the safety car pulled in caused some confusion and the race was stopped altogether shortly afterwards.

Bennett won race two after bouncing back from a couple of clashes with Will Orton – showing improved pace after his aging engine had been fully rebuilt since the last round – and a spin that left him 10th in race one. A train of up to eight cars battled at the head of the field, and Aspin (with some assistance) and David Ellesley both spun from the lead in separate incidents. That left Bennett in front and he edged clear to win from Steed and McKenna. Thomas Holland took both concurrent G40 Cup wins, his first victories in the category.

Honours were even between Theo Edgerton and Jack Bartholomew in the Porsche Sprint Challenge GB contest. Bartholomew pipped championship-leader Edgerton to pole position by just 0.008 seconds but come the race the teenager squeezed past on the run to Copse. He looked to have the win in the bag before copping a 5s track-limits penalty to hand Bartholomew his second consecutive victory. Edgerton repeated his startline move in race two, and this time steered clear of Silverstone's expansive run-off areas to take his fourth win of the season. Ethan Hawkey was a lonely third in either race, while reigning Am champion Ambrogio Perfetti returned to form with a pair of class wins, the second in fourth place overall after Matt Armstrong clashed with Charles Clark at Becketts, ending both their races.

Mark Paulson

RACE WINNERS

■ **BRDC British F3**
Races 1&2: Reece Ushijima
Race 3: Ayrton Simmons

■ **Ginetta GT5 Challenge & G40 Cup**
Race 1: Josh Steed
Race 2: John Bennett

■ **Porsche Sprint Challenge GB**
Race 1: Jack Bartholomew
Race 2: Theo Edgerton

Steed (58) won Ginetta GT5 opener after Aspin (26) penalty

RESULTS

British GT Championship 2021

Round 2: Silverstone, GT3

POS.	DRIVER 1/DRIVER 2	TEAM/CAR	CATEGORY	TIME
1	Hunter Abbott/Martin Kodric	2 Seas Motorsport Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	3h00m45.701s
2	Adam Balon/Sandy Mitchell	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan	Pro-Am	+7.231s
3	Leo Machitski/Dennis Lind	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan	Pro-Am	+7.871s
4	Giacomo Petrobelli/Charlie Eastwood	TF Sport/Aston Martin Vantage	Pro-Am	+27.338s
5	Ian Loggie/Yelmer Buurman	RAM Racing/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	+34.680s
6	Andrew Howard/Jonny Adam	Beechdean AMR/Aston Martin Vantage	Pro-Am	+1m24.095s
7	Bonamy Grimes/Marco Sorensen	TF Sport/Aston Martin Vantage	Pro-Am	1m43.779s
8	James Cottingham/Sam De Haan	RAM Racing/Mercedes-AMG	Silver-Am	+1:53.624s
9	Nick Jones/Scott Malvern	Team Parker Racing/Porsche 911	Pro-Am	+1 Lap
10	Stewart Proctor/Lewis Proctor	Balfe Motorsport/McLaren 720S	Silver-Am	+1 Lap

11 Michael Igoe/Phil Keen (WPI Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan) + 1 Lap; 12 Mia Flewitt/Euan Hankey (Team Rocket RJN/McLaren 720S) +1 Lap; 13 Shamus Jennings/Greg Caton (G-Cat Racing Porsche 911) +2 Laps; R Kelvin Fletcher/Martin Plowman (Paddock Motorsport/Bentley Continental) 69 laps; NC Morgan Tillbrook/Marcus Clutton (Enduro Motorsport/McLaren 720S) 46 Laps; NC Richard Neary/Sam Neary (Team ABBA Racing/Mercedes-AMG) 32 Laps; NC 70 Brendan Iribe/Ollie Millroy (Inception Racing/McLaren 720S) GT3 26 Laps. **Pole position:** Abbott/Hunter 3m57.461s (aggregate time). **Fastest lap:** Lind 1:59.034s (110.70mph). **Winner's average speed:** 104.49mph.

Round 2: Silverstone, GT4

POS.	DRIVER 1/DRIVER 2	TEAM/CAR	CATEGORY	TIME
1	Matt Topham/Darren Turner	Newbridge Motorsport/Aston Martin Vantage AMR	Pro-Am	3h01m29.187s
2	Richard Williams/Sennan Fielding	Steller Motorsport/Audi R8	Silver Cup	+3.311s
3	John Ferguson/Scott McKenna	Toyota Gazoo Racing UK/Toyota GR Supra	Pro-Am	+17.249s
4	Will Burns/Gus Burton	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	Silver Cup	+49.137s
5	Mark Sansom/Charlie Robertson	Assetto Motorsport/Ginetta G56	Pro-Am	1m21.210s
6	Chris Salkeld/Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	Pro-Am	+1 Lap
7	Matt Cowley/Will Moore	Academy Motorsport/Ford Mustang	Silver Cup	+1 Lap
8	Michael Benyahia/Alain Valente	Team Rocket RJN/McLaren 570S	Silver Cup	+1 Lap
9	Jordan Collard/James Kell	Team Rocket RJN McLaren 570S	Silver Cup	+1 Lap
10	Dave Whitmore/Jake Giddings	Ciceley Motorsport/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	+1 Lap

11 Nick Halstead/Jamie Stanley (Fox Motorsport/McLaren 570S) +2 Laps; 12 Katie Milner/Harry Hayek (Team Rocket RJN/McLaren 570S) +12 Laps; 13 Jack Brown/Ashley Marshall (Balfe Motorsport/McLaren 570S) +12 Laps. **Pole position:** Williams/Fielding 4m21.848s (aggregate time). **Fastest lap:** Turner 2m10.937s (100.64mph). **Winner's average speed:** 94.39mph.

DRIVER STANDINGS

Machitski and Lind lead the way

Burns/Burton remain on top

BRITISH GT: GT3

POS.	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Leo Machitski/Dennis Lind	49.5
2	Andrew Howard/Jonny Adam	45
3	Michael Igoe/Phil Keen	43.5
4	Ian Loggie/Yelmer Buurman	40.5
5	Adam Balon/Sandy Mitchell	37.5
6	Nick Jones/Scott Malvern	24
7=	Richard Neary/Sam Neary	15
7=	Stewart Proctor/Lewis Proctor	15
7=	Sam De Haan/James Cottingham	15
10	Kelvin Fletcher/Martin Plowman	10.5

11 Shamus Jennings/Greg Caton 6; 12 Lucky Khera/Ross Wylie 1.5

BRITISH GT: GT4

POS.	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Will Burns/Gus Burton	55.5
2	Richard Williams/Sennan Fielding	42
3	Chris Salkeld/Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke	39
4	Matt Topham Darren Turner	37.5
5	Mark Sansom/Charlie Robertson	33
6	James Kell/Jordan Collard	25.5
7	John Ferguson/Scott McKenna	22.5
8	Nick Halstead/Jamie Stanley	12
9=	Jack Brown/Ashley Marshall	9
9=	Will Moore/Matt Cowley	9

11= Harry Hayek/Katie Milner 6; 11= Alain Valente/Michael Benyahia 6; 13 David Whitmore/Jake Giddings 4.5

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FEATURE

MALCOLM WILSON
KEEPING BRITAIN AT THE TOP OF RALLYING

Nick Garton poses the MN readers' questions to a true British hero, Malcolm Wilson

Driver, team boss, businessman: Wilson

Malcolm Wilson OBE, winner of two British national rally titles and the 1994 British Rally Championship, founder of M-Sport and team principal of Ford's World Rally Championship programmes since 1997. That's a pretty hefty CV for a man who has been at the forefront of his chosen sport in a career that spans six decades.

As a driver, he burst onto the scene as a rising star of the British forests in the 1970s, most often at the wheel of self-prepared Ford Escort Mk2s. After leading the development of Ford's next generation of cars, the Escort RS1600 Mk3 and RS1700T, he starred in Audi quattros on the British scene before his breakthrough with Austin Rover in the Group B era was snatched away almost before it began when the category was outlawed.

Undaunted, the 65-year-old Cumbrian joined Vauxhall at the start of the Group A era before reuniting with Ford in 1990.

Not only did the reunion add to Wilson's own achievements at the wheel, but it also laid the foundations for the team that has carried the Blue Oval to manufacturers' titles in 2006, 2007 and 2017 as well as bringing two drivers' titles to Sebastien Ogier's current tally of seven.

Among the many achievements to which Wilson and M-Sport can lay claim is in finding some of the brightest stars of the future and giving them the grounding that they need to go on to

The list of M-Sport old boys has become a veritable who's who, with Petter Solberg, Markko Martin, Mikko Hirvonen, Jari-Matti Latvala, Elfyn Evans, Ott Tanak, Thierry Neuville, Mads Ostberg and Andreas Mikkelsen among the drivers whose World Rally Championship careers have been guided by Wilson's team.

With so much rich material to draw upon, the MN readers put their social media accounts to work in order for us to quiz the man himself on some of his many career highlights.

Question: When you signed Sebastien Ogier for 2017, did he approach you first or was it the other way around?
Joe Bramble
Via Twitter
Malcolm Wilson: "Do you know something? I genuinely can't remember! But the one thing that sticks in my mind is that on Rally GB, before the announcement was made about VW pulling out, Seb and I were on the forum together that Howard Davies runs.

"I don't know why but at some point during the Q&A with Howard and me and Seb, he said: 'You never know, I might be driving for Malcolm one year'.

"Then, of course, literally after Rally GB finished the announcement was made that VW were pulling out and, to be

Photos: Motorsport Images, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Ogier brought huge success to M-Sport

honest, I can't remember if I made contact with him or he made contact with me. All I can say is that I definitely would have contacted him at some point if he hadn't got in touch with me!

"We did try and get him in 2010-2011… I met him a few times in 2010, to be honest we even went to the Ford HQ in Merkenich to discuss with the then-chairman of Ford about him coming with, us but then our circumstances changed. It was when Abu Dhabi stepped down, so we ended up not being in a position to take him then.

"It was hard to keep Ogier a secret"

Malcolm Wilson

"But it was always my target from his very early days. I was always very impressed with Seb, so when that opportunity finally came, when VW pulled out, then for sure it was my absolute priority to find a way to be able to get him on board in one of our cars.

"The one thing I wanted to do was make sure that he was happy with our car, because again, you know, it was a brand new car for 2017. I was so confident in what our guys had designed, but I wanted him to make sure that he was happy and I know by that stage he had already tested the Toyota and the like, so it gave us a great vote of confidence as well to think that he was happy to come and join us for the '17 season.

"I'll admit that it was difficult to keep his arrival quiet because, you can imagine, I was so excited about getting him to sign. But I thought definitely: let's just tease the staff a bit. They were all desperate to get a top driver, considering how good the car was, so it was a nice bit of fun with the guys to just drop it in at the end and announce it after the car was launched."

Question: How did it feel watching Ott Tanak win the World Rally Championship drivers' title in 2019 for Toyota, a driver you had nurtured from the beginning of his WRC career?
Robert Medland
Via Facebook

MW: "It was a very similar story early in the careers of both Ott and Elfyn [Evans], it was a bit stop-start and we had them both with us for a long time, from 2010-11. That's probably something which a lot of people in the outside world don't understand: quite how long it takes a driver to get to the level that Ott and Elfyn and Seb have reached.

"The evidence is there to see how long it does actually take… Seb, obviously, is a bit of an exception but to be honest if I could have my choice again, yes, I'd have Ott back. Okay, I think if Ott had won the title in 2018 it might have hurt a little bit! But to be honest he deserved it in 2019.

"The thing I really enjoy is that both he and Elfyn got their first wins here with us.

continued on page 22

Ott Tanak's ability first began to burst through as part of M-Sport

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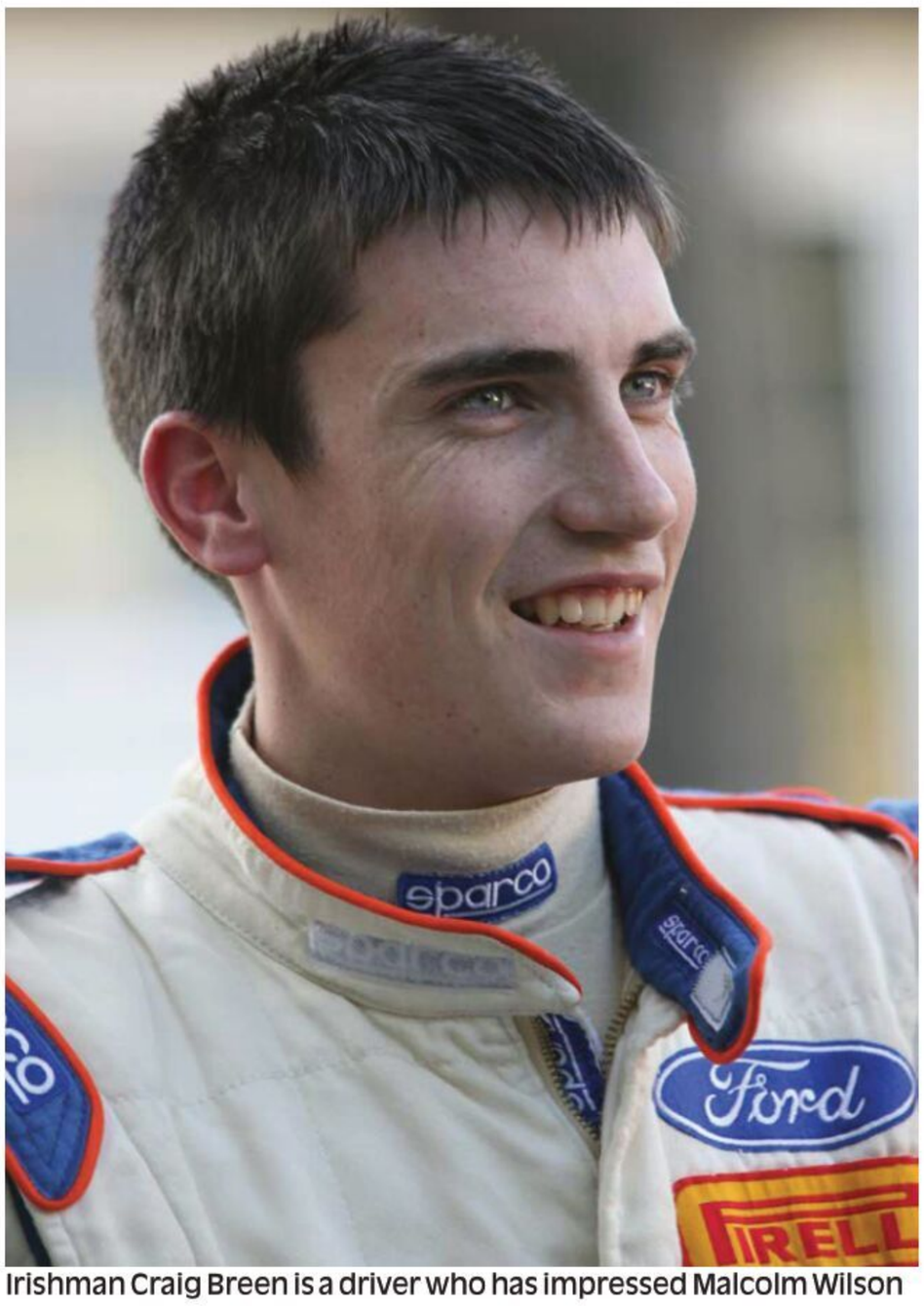
FEATURE

Evans's breakthrough came with M-Sport in 2017



Irishman Craig Breen is a driver who has impressed Malcolm Wilson

If we can play a part in helping them step up to be where they need to be then great – sometimes it's hard but it's something that we've done for many, many years and we have to accept that we can't compete with the sort of budget that some teams are prepared to offer them.

"I always feel that it's the same with any of the staff here at the end of the day. If they come here and move on to F1 or wherever it is that they want to get to, if we've helped them towards that, it honestly makes me feel quite proud.

"It's a part of life here that I really, really enjoy because the great thing is that you never get two drivers the same. Look at the difference that's come by partnering Chris Patterson with Gus [Greensmith]. It's transformed him in every sense, both in his driving and more importantly how he's reacting to negative situations. It's all part of the experience of growing up as a driver in WRC."

Question: Is there any chance of seeing Craig Breen driving an M-Sport Rally1 car for a full season in the WRC next year? Is there any news on next year's driver line-up?
Robert Medland
via Facebook
MW: "All I can say to Mr Medland is that we're talking to a lot of drivers at the moment and Craig is definitely one of them. You've got to remember that Craig started with us as well.

"Craig spent a lot of time here actually working in the workshop with the guys and again he's matured, he's developed and is obviously a top-line driver now.

"He would fit into our environment really well, we are still classed as a family team in WRC.

"All I can say at the moment is that there are several guys we've been speaking to."

Question: With your history of giving young drivers an opportunity to prove themselves, is Max McRae on your radar?
Mark Hatton
Via Facebook
MW: "We are definitely looking at Max McRae and everything that he does. For obvious reasons, we've got a lot of associations with the name, shall we say, and of course we are looking and monitoring what Max is doing.

"He's certainly doing very well out in Australia although we need to be mindful that the competition there is nothing like what he might find in the world championship. Hopefully he'll get the chance and really Max needs to find the way to get into Junior WRC because that really is the best route, the most cost-effective route for any young driver.

"I know some of my guys have had discussions with Alister and so that's really the next step for Max, but really you're still looking at least three years from where he is now to seeing him in a WRC car. That's the sad thing about rallying is that it's a long process and a costly process.

"It does seem odd sometimes talking to the sons of good drivers who are still quick themselves. We were talking to Tom Blomqvist not long ago about potentially getting in the Bentley and it seems five minutes since they were little kids in the service park but there's clearly some serious talent there."

Question: As a driver did you over-achieve or underachieve?
Grahame Wheeler
Via Twitter
MW: "Definitely underachieved. I never got the results that I probably could have had and I'm not blaming anyone else, I'm only blaming myself. When I was that age and driving, to be honest, I genuinely thought that I could do everything.

"I thought I could drive and I could still have a business and it's only now in this role, and realising what you need to do to operate at the highest level of the WRC, that you certainly can't have any other distractions.

"But on the other hand I have no regrets in any way, shape or form because otherwise I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing now: running the team and having much more satisfaction from what I'm doing in this role than anything I found as a driver. Don't get me wrong: I love my driving, but I know that I could have had a lot better results if I had applied myself to purely and simply driving.

"I keep looking back and it was an extraordinary workload but it's always been me, I've always been a very, very hard worker and put a lot of commitment into everything and when I was 30 I just genuinely felt I could do anything.

"I have to say that people like Mike Greasley and some of the other guys, even Fred Gallagher, were telling me at the time 'look, Malcolm, you've got the speed and everything you just need to do

"I never got the results maybe I should have done"

Malcolm Wilson

Wilson was on the verge of a three-year deal with ARG

that: just drive,' but being the guy that I am then I felt that I could do both.

"Even at that early point I still enjoyed the business side. It was nothing like the scale that we are at now, of course, but I have always enjoyed business as well. Obviously if I hadn't enjoyed it, if we were losing money or whatever, then I would probably have stopped.

"I always say that when I retire and if Seb Ogier ever wants a job then he can run my business because I know it would definitely be in safe hands.

"He does everything himself: he doesn't have a manager, he does all his own deals and it's just so great to deal with someone who knows exactly what they want, so I think he would do a great job running teams in future."

Question: What was it like driving in the Group B era? Frightening or thrilling?
Grahame Wheeler
Via Twitter
MW: "Oh, thrilling! It was a magical era. I mean, you were driving monsters. Everything from a 380bhp Metro to 600bhp in the Sport quattro and RS200 it was just unforgettable, but don't get me wrong, it ended sadly, and Henri [Toivonen] was an ex-team mate.

"It had to be stopped, and it was quite honestly a big contributor to me not achieving everything that I set out to achieve, perhaps what I feel I should have achieved, in my career as a driver.

"I had just signed a three-year contract with Austin Rover, I had really laid out my plan and agreed everything with [team principal] John Davenport at the time. The first year I just wanted to do just to learn the rallies, the second year I'd step up a bit more and then the third year would be the year when we really went for a shot at the title… even then I was planning and had a strategy, not just to get in the car and go. But with the cars being banned at the end of '86 it left me, and I wasn't the only one, without a drive. So it really did have a big influence on my career path as well."

Question: What was Colin McRae like to work with? Did you ever have big arguments?
Janice Sanders
Via Facebook
MW: "I don't think we had any big arguments. We'd have a few intense discussions every now and again but never any sort of stand-up rows of that kind. Colin was Colin, he was the hero to of a lot of people and don't get me wrong: he was a devil! He would push the boundaries in a lot of aspects but in all honesty we never had any big arguments.

"He was so resourceful if you had an issue with the car. You could pitch Colin against any of the top mechanics in the sport and he would, probably nine times out of 10, beat them or surpass them in the speed of changing something.

"That's what a lot of people could never understand: he had that tremendous skill and flair at the wheel, but he won all of the most difficult and demanding rallies because he had that understanding of how much the mechanical components could take.

"To the outside world it looked like he destroyed cars, which he did in accidents, but his mechanical sympathies on those difficult rallies that would often break a car was totally unique.

"He was, without question in my book, the best driver on those real car-breaking events in the heyday of the Acropolis, Cyprus, the Safari and Argentina. He would know exactly how far he could push the car mechanically.

"Oh yes: and he loved to party!"

continued on page 24

Wilson returned to Ford in 1990 at the wheel of a Ford Sierra Sapphire Cosworth for a mixed programme

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FEATURE

Group B was 'magical' to Wilson although he supported killing off the 600bhp monsters like the RS200

Wilson was a big admirer of Colin McRae's level of mechanical sympathy which shone on the tough rallies

The dream team? Carlos Sainz joined Colin McRae in Wilson's M-Sport Ford line-up for three seasons

Question: Do you look back on the Colin McRae/Carlos Sainz era with any regret – you never won a title during that time?
Alan Abrahams
Via Twitter
MW: "The worst one was in 2001, when Richard [Burns] won after Colin crashed on Rally GB. That was a great opportunity for us to get our first drivers' title, so that was one which hurt, to be honest. We should have achieved more than we did with that sort of driver combination but the one that really slipped through the net was in 2001.

"Carlos was a great driving force for pushing the team on and getting the best out of everybody so he did a great job in that sense. We just had a few issues that prevented us from more than one title that we should have had in that era. The package was good enough to have won both championships."

Question: How close did you come to sign Sebastien Loeb? Do you consider that you should have done more?
Chris Pots
Via Facebook:
MW: "Very close. I think in 2005, he tested with us up here. We were very close because then, the following year, Citroen was stepping back but they wanted to retain him. We were very close, he was happy with the car and while there was a new car for 2006 he wanted to try the 2005 car which he was really happy with.

"He obviously got a very good offer to stay with Citroen. There was a lot of home comfort, it was where he started his career and I think he probably felt quite a bit of pressure to stay where he was.

"Sebastien then won his third title even after he missed thee rallies [after breaking his arm while cycling], but then of course Marcus [Gronholm], threw it away on the first day in Australia by rolling the car.

"Marcus was a great guy and we were watching it live on the big screen in the service park when it happened and so it's one of the things, it was one of those times where you see it happening and you really can't believe what you're seeing because all that he needed was a sensible finish to become world champion.

"It was a difficult period, but equally a great period for us because the combination of Marcus and Mikko Hirvonen brought Ford its first manufacturers' title for 27 years. So while it was disappointing not to get the drivers' title, we did at least get the manufacturers'."

Question: I remember you driving the Escort RS Cosworth in the 1994 British Rally Championship. Throughout your rallying career what was your favourite car and why?
Andrew Rankin
Va Facebook
MW: "It's my favourite livery out of all the cars I ever drove. So many people still come to me today with models and photos of that car to sign and so on. So yeah, it was special but my all-time favourite car has to be the Ford Escort Mk2.

"I can't think of a specific one that I drove which stands out above any others, just what you could do with a Escort Mk2 and of course for me the engine was just music, for me there's just never been any better sounding rally car than an Escort, driven properly, at full chat."

Question: Of all your World Rally Championship drivers, who was the best and who was the one that didn't deliver on their potential?
Pete Faulkner
Via Twitter
MW: "There's no question about the number one and that is Sebastien Ogier. What we achieved together in the small team that we are compared to the others, and the way that he and I interacted, then for me that's not even close. A clear number one is Sebastien.

"As to who did or didn't deliver, to be honest that's not one that I can really answer because there are so many factors in play on a rally. Does anyone deliver perfection on all surfaces, make the right tyre choices at the right moment, sustain their best performance for three or four days solidly? Not even the Loebs and Ogiers do that.

"I think the big thing is, what I saw in Sardinia particularly, is how much Ogier is loving his driving this year. And from my own personal experience, when you love what you're doing to the extent that Sebastien clearly does, it puts you on a footing to really get the best out of yourself and your team.

"When you have a driver who's under pressure and over-thinking their pacenotes and things, you will never get the best out of them. What's impressed me most this year is that while Sebastien's made mistakes, I've heard him say that he wasn't happy with where his set-up was or his tyres at various times… nobody is perfect. But knowing how mentally strong he is and when you are loving your driving so clearly, he will be very, very hard to beat for the championship.

"His drive on the first day in Sardinia, for example, was just absolutely fantastic. I just love it, honestly, knowing him like I do and watching that effort when he was first on the road on Friday. Just exceptional."

Question: Would you ever consider entering an M-Sport team in the British Touring Car Championship?
Richard Campbell
Via Facebook
MW: "That's a very easy question for me to answer, I don't even need a lot of detail, because with our contract now to do the BTCC engine for the next five years we're not allowed to have a team."

Question: When are you going to give Chris Ingram a seat? He's a fantastic, quick and skilled driver, European Rally champion and definitely deserves a World Rally Championship run out?
Peter Skillen
Via Facebook
MW: "We've been speaking with Chris but sadly, we've touched on it earlier, he's done great to get the money that he's got so far but he needs some more funding to get him to the next step. I think it's fair to say we would need to see a bit more, watch him on a few more events, and see exactly how he's coming along.

"He's made good progress this year and we are speaking to him but at the moment, for us, it would need to be a commercial arrangement. We would like to get him in one of our cars, don't get me wrong, but we would need to at least have some form of investment from him at this early point in his career.

"It was reinforced to me in Poland this weekend that when you look at the veteran drivers in Rally2 cars at the moment, the pace of the Andreas Mikkelsens and these really experienced drivers is actually quite scary. The first of the young guys on their way up is sort of two minutes behind them at the finish.

"Losing the title with Colin McRae in 2001 really hurt"

Malcolm Wilson

At the wheel of favourite car, the Escort Mk2, in 1981

Sebastien Loeb has discussion with Wilson about a drive in 2005

Wilson's admiration of world champion Ogier knows no bounds

Chris Ingram is a driver who M-Sport has spoken to about the future

Briton Gus Greensmith has benefited from the co-driver skills of Chris Patterson on recent WRC events

"It's such a massive step, that's the problem, and it's probably quite sad for up-and-comers like Chris because if the likes of Mikkelsen, Mads Ostberg, Adrien Fourmaux and Teemu Suninen weren't there in Rally2 cars, then you would be looking at the young talent in a different light.

"All it shows at the moment is how much of a role that experience plays and the confidence that it brings you to go out and run at that speed. As it is, going head-to-head with outright WRC rally winners really just underlines how far the younger drivers still have to go.

"Oliver Solberg's got a big programme with Hyundai, he's obviously got huge potential, but there's a lot of talent in the WRC at present and very few seats available the very top level. All of these young drivers really need to evaluate the best platform for them to develop and look at how they can give themselves the best chance."

Question: Would you ever consider working with another manufacturer in rallying, as I feel Ford is never 100 per cent behind your dreams?
Jeremy Waldron
Via Facebook
MW: "How could I after – what is it, 24 years with Ford? There's blue blood in my veins and I have to say that we're very fortunate to have the support of a company with which we have worked together for so long.

"Don't get me wrong, we would love to have the full package and funding of the works teams at Toyota and Hyundai but we've worked together for so long and we've obviously found a commercial way that works for Ford and for us. It obviously puts a lot more pressure on me and makes things more difficult and I just hope that maybe going forward we can find a way to get the very top line drivers back in our cars.

"But I have no desire whatsoever to change away from Ford because we have got such a long standing relationship that works for both of us. There's so many things that we've got linked in with them now, like the MS-RT Transit vans and Ranger SUV, things like that. In terms of the team and the WRC, though, the thing at the moment is that we get incredible technical support from Ford in the US.

"We couldn't have done the 2022 car without that because the levels of technology now, with the hybrid, mean that while we could have done a car, it wouldn't be what we've got. I am so confident that our 2022 car will be exactly like the 2017 Fiesta WRC: able to win straight out of the box."

Question: Has there ever been any interest in developing the Ford Focus RS Mk3 into a Group N-style rally car?
Guy Whittaker
Via Instagram
MW: "From our side: no. To be honest, we've always been working and trying to find a way with the FIA to get this ladder of opportunity that is now finally in place from Rally1 right down to Rally5. This is something which has always been a goal of mine for many, many years because when I started, for instance, you started with a 1300 Escort and you could still use that same bodyshell right the way through to a full Group 4, two-litre.

"So that has always been my target, and we've now finally got a great categorisation of every car. And of course now with our new Rally3 car, you've got something that is more competitive than the best of the old Group N cars that is actually considerably cheaper than a Group N car was as well.

"It's taken a long, long time to get there but when you look at how successful the Rally2/R5 car has been, I feel that Rally3 will be every bit as successful as R5 was. There's nothing really left on the table, nothing on my wish-list that hasn't been incorporated into the new structure.

"We've worked very closely with the FIA to get to this point, they're very respectful for what we try to do because nobody knows more than me how expensive this sport is and I really want to try and find cost-effective ways to create the opportunity for people to progress up the ladder." ■

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PREVIEW

Photos: SMJ Photography

KELLY AIMS TO HOLD HIS NERVE AS MN CIRCUIT RALLY SERIES REACHES ITS CLIMAX

Anglesey will play host to a crucial double-header this weekend. By Dan Mason

MOTORSPORT NEWS CIRCUIT RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP IN ASSOCIATION WITH MSVR

Kelly is in pole position going into the weekend

POINTS

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship

After 3/5 rounds

POS	DRIVER	CAR	PTS
1	Mark Kelly	Ford Fiesta R5	172
2	Kevin Procter	Ford Fiesta R5	149
3	Josh Payton	Ford Escort Mk2	139
4	Charles Payne	Ford Fiesta	130
5	Frank Bird	Ford Fiesta R5	124
6	Rob Hughes	Ford Fiesta R5	122
7	David Henderson	Ford Escort Mk2	109
8	Chris Ruck	Opel Corsa	106
9	Nick Whale	Ford Escort Mk2	106
10	Christopher Newton	Vauxhall Nova	106

The fight for the 2020-21 MN Circuit Rally Championship boils down to its double-header finale at Anglesey this weekend with a series stalwart entering as the firm favourite for overall honours.

It was a season that often looked in danger against the weight of the Covid-19 pandemic. From being "a couple of hours" from cancellation in March, organisers successfully battled to put together a five-round season which, despite challenges, has proved a highly intense campaign.

Darren Spann, series co-ordinator, says: "It's been quite a year on all fronts, not least for all those that have been directly affected by the pandemic, so planning a championship and rallies seems insignificant in comparison. The determination to fulfil a championship is nothing short of extraordinary. We, as a rallying community, are truly indebted to the many volunteer organisers who have made this happen."

It therefore seems fitting that the duo of Mark Kelly and Neil Colman – multiple MNCRC rally winners – are in the driving seat for their first overall title, leading by 23 points thanks to some key improvements all round.

Their switch from older Ford Escort machinery to a Ford Fiesta R5, coupled with coaching from British Rally Championship star Matt Edwards, has allowed Kelly to unleash his known ability in a rally car. Closing in on BRC frontrunners and his ever-improving MN Circuit Rally Championship title rival Frank Bird, it was the third rally of the MN season at Oulton Park which showed Kelly's increasing determination. He secured a crucial victory while taking the fight to proven names.

Kelly explains: "The Ford Fiesta R5 is a fantastic car and it's so much fun to drive. I'm privileged to be in this position and to do it in a car like this. We've enjoyed the battle."

Colman adds: "We didn't know what we expected at the start of the [Oulton] rally. We haven't got as much experience on gravel but, on circuits, we were matching them time for time."

Tarmac confidence puts them in good shape for the Anglesey double-header, particularly with target man Bird absent due to GT racing commitments in France.

Attention shifts to Kevin Procter to give chase in the Ford Fiesta freight train, sitting 33 points adrift but with two rallies and 120 points to play for. Reliability is key for the title fighters, while the unpredictable weather also plays its role whenever the series visits the Welsh coast.

Procter's best result of fourth this season could arguably have been improved to second in the Neil Howard Stages most recently if not for a late delay, meaning he will want to apply pressure and hope the cards to fall in his direction.

He and the Fiesta duo of Andy Scott and last year's Anglesey runner-up Rob Hughes will add fuel to the fire in the weekend double, as will the similar car of Charles Payne, who has been highly consistent all season to climb to fourth in the points.

Hughes and local co-driver Sion Cunniff enjoy the trip to Wales, and a strong showing could help them trim the 50-point cushion standing in their way of a possible maiden title. The man who denied them a famous win last year at the same venue is also among the entry list for the second time this season; last year's overall MNCRC champion Barry Morris cannot be counted out of causing an upset in the season finale and made his long-awaited return to the championship at Oulton Park. He used that event to bed himself back into the fray in the Darrian GTR and should be fully up to speed in North Wales.

Two podium visits for Kelly will ensure the series leader fends off his biggest contenders for overall title glory. However, many of those theoretically chasing are from other classes.

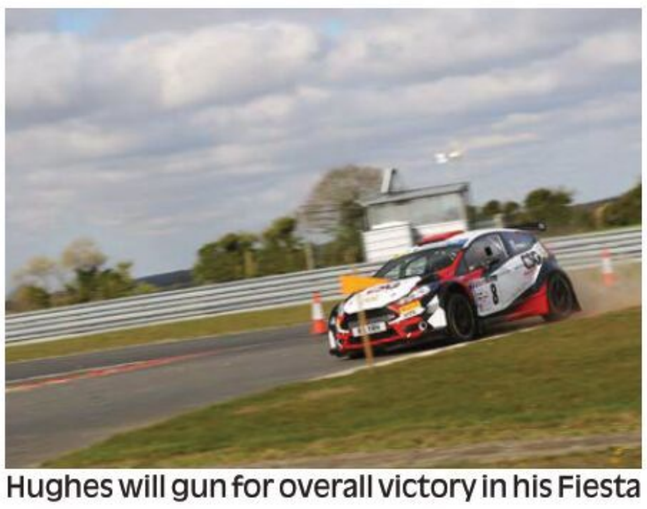
Heading the charge – and looking to ironically undo Kelly's hard work in his previous choice of machinery – is the lead Class C contingent, Josh Payton. The Ford Escort Mk2 driver has been a giant-killer in older machinery and dominant in the class, so will hope to take advantage of any slip-ups for those at the helm of the order.

The leaders of Class D, B and A have also carved their way into contention, albeit as outsiders looking to leap on any misfortune for the Fiestas over the two days. Chris Ruck and David Henderson are in-form class favourites, while a full season for Christopher Newton puts his Vauxhall Nova right in the fight should he complete a clean sweep.

The Scottish contingent is bolstered by the Skodaru of Drew Gallagher, while further R5 challengers include Graham Coffey – who enters his second rally of the season with an unconfirmed co-driver – and Mike Taylor, bringing his Lotus Talbot Sunbeam back to the stages.

Former champion Chris West will continue to gather knowledge of his still-developing Porsche 997 GT3, a prominent rally project that requires mileage before its post-season development takes shape. ■

Procter will need two solid results to win title


Hughes will gun for overall victory in his Fiesta

The battles will rage throughout the field

Newton: sights on glory

Henderson: ever spectacular

Some star performances in lesser-powered machines have outlined several class favourites going into the double header in North Wales this weekend.

Class A has been a steamroller showing from the rapid Christopher and Anthony Newton, hoping to complete a clean sweep after the Vauxhall Nova pairing's three dominant triumphs already.

Chris Ruck goes from strength to strength, meanwhile, and is in the prime spot to defend his Class B title after two wins and a third in his Opel Corsa, but Mark Peterson's consistency puts him just 10 points adrift in the fight. The series also welcomes back Ashleigh Morris, who pushed Ruck all the way last year and will hope to rekindle that class rivalry once more.

Class C remains Josh Payton and Jamie Vaughan's to lose with over double the score of their nearest rival Josh Evans, the former looking at Kelly's overall title lead also.

A remarkable fightback in Class D is in progress by David Henderson. After missing Donington Park, the Ford Escort ace has challenged the overall top 10 in his last two rallies to close the class cushion to 14 points after two wins. A brace of podiums would be enough for Nick Whale's similar Ford Escort Mk2 however, so consistency will be on his mind.

Greg Williams' scoring efforts also put him 34 points to the good for Class E1 honours, but dramas would open the door for Oulton runner-up, Joe Cunningham.

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

BTCC REPORT: BRANDS HATCH

IN BRIEF

First for Rowbottom
Team Dynamics locked out the front row of the grid for the first time this season as Dan Rowbottom took his maiden fastest time in the 30-minute session on Saturday. The Kidderminster racer set the benchmark 48.074s late on in qualifying while other drivers struggled to improve, and he was a scant 0.005s clear of three-time champion Gordon Shedden in the sister Honda Civic Type R.

Neate is tidy
Motorbase Performance racer Andy Neate returned to the British Touring Car Championship line-up at Brands Hatch after having taken a sabbatical from the previous meeting at Snetterton, where his car was driven by Jessica Hawkins. The Ford Focus driver took a best finish of 24th place in the second event of the weekend, and saw the chequered flag in all three races in Kent.

Start to finish
The opening race of the weekend at Brands Hatch was the second time in nine races where all 29 of the starters managed to make it to the chequered flag. The previous race was round one at Snetterton earlier in the month. Rick Parfitt's Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Racing Hyundai made contact with Nic Hamilton's Team Hard Cupra R late on in the race and both spun at Druids, but the pair was able to rejoin and complete the 24 laps.

BMW holds on
Tom Oliphant's race one win at Brands Hatch helped the WSR operated BMW team to open up its lead in the BTCC Manufacturers/ Constructors Championship. The team has pushed its buffer over rival team Motorbase Performance out to 34 points after the nine races to date in 2021.

Sutton's edge
As well as a three-point advantage at the top of the overall drivers' championship, Laser Tools Racing driver Ash Sutton hold a similar margin at the head of the Independents Trophy title race too, despite not winning a single round at Brands Hatch. Those divisional wins were taken by Gordon Shedden (Team Dynamics Honda Civic), Tom Ingram (Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N) and Adam Morgan (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport).

Honda man's trophies
Pole position winner Daniel Rowbottom might have missed out on a win, but he continued his domination of the Jack Sears Trophy, for drivers who had yet to score a podium before the start of the season. He took three more wins to take his tally to eight triumphs from nine rounds.

Rowbottom: Silverware

Ingram was a winner again

Hyundai man has now cut the points gap

SUTTON AND INGRAM SET UP THE BATTLE

The Infiniti and Hyundai men have teed up an intense 2021 title scrap. By Matt James

Three thrillers at Brands Hatch provided a popular win for Tom Oliphant in his WSR BMW, one for the Ciceley BMW of Adam Morgan and one for Tom Ingram in his Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Racing Hyundai.

They were the ones walking away with the headlines, but a plot was also being played out in their wake. Reigning champion Ash Sutton put in three strong points-collecting drives in his Laser Tools Racing Infiniti to cement his position at the top of the standings, while Colin Turkington's weekend went the other way in his WSR BMW.

The Northern Irishman simply couldn't get a handle on the set-up of his rear-wheel-drive car and looked nothing more than a midfielder in Kent. It was a very strange sight.

Race one
The first surprise of the weekend came in qualifying when Dan Rowbottom topped the times. The Team Dynamics Honda Civic man narrowly pipped team-mate Gordon Shedden for his maiden prime slot, while Jake Hill's MB Motorsport Ford Focus and the WSR BMW of Oliphant shared row two. The fully ballasted title leader Sutton lined up seventh in the Infiniti Q50.

From pole, Rowbottom's getaway was a truly terrible one. He had spoken to mentor and triple champion Matt Neal before the race and the advice hadn't worked. "He told me to start it like a road car," joked Rowbottom. "Maybe I went too far down that route…"

While he slipped down to seventh, Oliphant made full use of his rear-wheel drive from his row-two start to sweep ahead of Shedden into Paddock and assume top spot, while Moffat also dealt with the Honda ahead on the run down to Graham Hill Bend. Sutton followed in a feisty fourth from Hill and Ingram's Hyundai, which had been delayed by an assault from Shedden into Clearways at the end of lap one.

Oliphant wasn't for hanging about. He'd wriggled half a second clear by the end of the opening lap and got his head down while Shedden set about unseating Moffat from second.

"Those first laps were like qualifying laps for me," said Oliphant, who held on to his advantage for the entire 24 laps.

It took five laps for Shedden to get ahead of Moffat at Druids but, by that stage, the BMW was 3.7s ahead. Oliphant explained that he was aware the challenge would be coming. "As soon as I saw it was Shedden into second place, I knew I was going to have to work hard," said the winner. "Holding someone like Shedden at bay for 24 laps is never going to be easy, but I had looked after my tyres and I had just enough grip left at the end to keep the buffer."

There was a scare on the final tour, though, as Rick Parfitt was regaining his mojo after an earlier spin and the leader was approaching. Oliphant lunged for the inside at Clearways and made it to the flag 0.188s ahead of Shedden.

Shedden was ruing the time spent behind Infiniti man Moffat but was delighted with the handling of the Civic Type R. "Sure I am disappointed not to win but I had lost too much time early on. If that race had been two or three laps more, it would have been a different story," said the three-time title winner.

A comeback to third place underlined the pace that Rowbottom had shown on Saturday. He was mighty on the brakes into Druids in his ballast-free Team Dynamics car and despatched host of rivals to regain a rostrum position on lap 10. Once he had cleared Moffat, he banked what he had got. "Pushing back through early on had taken the life out of the tyres," he explained. "So I am delighted to get back to the front."

One of those who had fallen victim to Rowbottom was Hill. The Focus man eventually claimed fourth after muscling his way ahead of Moffat in a move that started at Clearways at the end of lap 12 and finished at Paddock Hill Bend. It was a skirmish which allowed Sutton, nailed to the bootlid of Hill, to jump up to fifth. Ingram was also able to depose Moffat to race on to an eventual sixth place, a result he was particularly pleased with given his 66kg of success ballast.

Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Racing Hyundai man Chris Smiley was a competitive seventh and of the ailing Moffat. BTC Racing Honda Civic man Josh Cook and Team Hard Cupra R driver Jack Goff rounded out the top 10 once Stephen Jelley had been pinged with a five-second penalty for an out-of-position start and dropped from ninth to 15th.

While that infuriated the WSR driver, his result was a great deal better than his team-mate Turkington. The four-time champion's car was robbed of front-end grip and the Northern Irishman was at a loss. "We were struggling, and there is nowhere to really pass around here," he said.

A tap and a spin further on in a lacklustre race dropped him to a 20th position finish (after his assailant Sam Osborne (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) had been pushed back behind the BMW in the results).

Race two
Oliphant's task, he knew, would be a lot harder in the second race. While he had the advantage of a clear track ahead of him, he also had 75kg of extra weight to carry.

He did a manful job for 26 of the race's 27 laps, only to fall victim to a boisterous move from Ingram to dislodge him with just over one mile remaining.

The first major casualty of the race was front-row man Shedden, who'd mirrored Rowbottom's poor getaway from race one and was swamped on the run to Paddock Hill Bend. As he lunged for the apex to preserve his fourth spot, Hill was on his inside and the pair collided. Shedden collected a half-spin and then ruined his race for good when he touched Jelley at the top of Paddock one tour later. "I think Stephen was having his accident and turned up at the corner at warp speed seven [and into me]," said a disgruntled Shedden. Jelley ended up in the gravel while the contact damaged the steering of the Honda.

That skirmish, plus a three-wide scrabble for second place at Druids – which was resolved in favour of Rowbottom, from Ingram and Hill – meant Oliphant had a very healthy 1.4s in his pocket by the time the safety car was scrambled to assist with the clear-up of Jelley's BMW.

At the restart on lap eight, Oliphant was getting a much more vigorous work over from Rowbottom, whose mirrors then became full of Hill's Focus once the Kent racer had got inside Ingram on the run to Paddock on lap 10. It was all for naught though as the Ford's front left delated and pitched the former championship leader out of the race.

It left Rowbottom in Oliphant's wheeltracks still, but he was having to look to the feisty Ingram behind. The pressure had to give and it did on lap 18. The Honda got a great run on the leading BMW out of Paddock and tried to go around the outside at Druids, but it only served to wrong-foot Rowbottom and allowed Ingram to sneak into second spot.

The Hyundai man looked much more serious about getting the lead. "I could see where Oliphant was stronger and where I was," said Ingram. "I knew he was carrying full weight, and I was strong into Paddock and Clearways. He left a gap on the last lap, and I filled it. There was slight contact, but that it what happens when you are racing so closely."

Worse was to follow for Oliphant when his spent rubber left him powerless to defend from Sutton, who snuck underneath his rival on the run to the line.

Oliphant, for his part, was sanguine despite losing a potential win. "I've still got a smile," he said afterwards, as if trying to convince himself. "I think Ingram was optimistic into that last lap. I guess I could have defended more…."

Rowbottom landed fourth in his tyre-hampered Civic and he had been forced to defend from a queue involving Cook, Dan Lloyd (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra), Smiley and Lloyd's team-mate Jason Plato for the latter part of the 27-lapper.

Turkington had another very subdued race but progressed from 20th on the grid to finish in 17th place. He was still outside the points in a very out-of-sorts weekend.

Race three
Ingram couldn't have done a worse job in the reverse-grid draw. He pulled the maximum number of 12 out of the bag and that gave Morgan pole in the BMW 330i M Sport. He was joined on the front row by Goff while the weekend's heavy hitters up to that point mired much further back.

Once he had blasted away from pole, there was very little doubt that Morgan would be able to control the race and he headed to his first victory of the

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Shedden and Jelley got together in race two

Ingram's race-two move to pass Tom Oliphant...

Adam Morgan's win in race three wasn't without some dramas

campaign. Goff initially got a good start, but a wobble at Paddock Hill Bend on lap three meant he ceded the position to Moffat. The Scot held second until lap 11, when Goff restored the order. By that stage, Morgan was more than a second ahead and well in command. It wasn't without its dramas though. "We had fitted new brake pads and discs before that race," explained Morgan. "I had a couple of lock-ups which I wasn't really aware of until my engineer got on the radio. And then there was a shower in the middle of the race: like I needed that..."

He measured his pace and stroked home for Ciceley's first win with the rear-wheel-drive car.

Goff's run to second place was also struck by retardation problems, but he admitted it was his own doing when he slithered wide at Paddock to give Moffat the chance to regain second place before his fightback. Again, it was a landmark first podium result, this time for Team Hard and the Cupra R.

Moffat's tenure of third place came under serious attack over the closing stages as Plato used all his cunning to get a run on the rear-wheel-drive car in the dash for the line and the Vauxhall man came up just 0.012s shy.

Plato headed home Cook, who overtook his BTC team-mate Senna Proctor to earn the result. Behind Proctor was the Rory Butcher, who finally had the handling in his Speedworks Toyota Corolla that he had been seeking all weekend.

Perhaps the most important performance of the race came from Sutton, who chipped away to earn eighth spot from 11th on the grid and with 66kg of ballast. He outscored 12th placed Ingram and that meant Sutton walked away from the Kent circuit with a slender title lead in his pocket.

It wasn't the headline result of the day, but in a championship that is settled by the slenderest of margins, the extra four points that Sutton earned in the finale have given him a three-point lead in the title chase.

Turkington knows all about collecting all he can, and a marginally improved car helped him to 14th in race three.

He is now 39 marks behind the leader. If he is to earn a fifth title, the legwork will have to begin at Oulton Park at the start of August.

SUPPORT RACES

Lorcan Hanafin (JTR) and Will Martin (Richardson Racing) triumphed in two fractious Porsche Carrera Cup GB counters. Hanafin was gifted a win in a hectic opener after race leader Dan Cammish (Redline Racing) and Harry King (Team Parker Racing) made contact at Paddock as King went for a narrow gap on the inside. The contact spun Cammish but King came under pressure from Hanafin, who forced a mistake out of the reigning champion at Druids mid-race, King's resulting spin into the tyre wall forcing retirement. King started 12th for the second race and was brutal in his quest to reach the front but although he got as far as second, damage to the geometry meant he couldn't catch Martin, while Cammish took third after a late-race brush with Jamie Orton (JTR).

Tom Hibbert (Rob Boston Racing) bounced back from a hefty race-one accident to take Ginetta GT4 Supercup honours in race three, despite late-race pressure from an inspired James Blake-Baldwin (AK Motorsport) who had missed race two after damage but thus ran fresher tyres. Baldwin bagged second from 14th on the grid, while Carlito Miracco (Preptech UK) and Adam Smalley (Elite Motorsport) took the other wins.

Callum Voisin was the star of the Ginetta Junior triple-header, his R Racing entry winning all three races, two of which had red flags, while the Mini Challenge was equally frantic. Max Bird (Excelr8) won race one from British GT Championship refugee Jack Mitchell (Excelr8), before the two tangled on the last lap of race two. Bird was despatched into the gravel after Mitchell made an error at Paddock Hill Bend, and was excluded, allowing Max Coates (Graves Motorsport) to inherit the win from Dan Zelos (Excelr8) who won race three.

Zak Taylor (Arden Motorsport), James Hedley (Fortec Motorsport) and Matias Zagazeta (Argenti Motorsport) scooped British F4 honours at Brands Hatch, Taylor from sixth on the grid and Hedley in a mixed-conditions scrap on Sunday morning.

David Addison

RACE WINNERS

■ **Porsche Carrera Cup GB**
Race 1 (34 laps): Lorcan Hanafin (JTR); **Race 2 (34 laps):** Will Martin (Richardson Racing)

■ **F4 British Championship**
Race 1: Zak Taylor (Arden Motorsport); **Race 2 (20 mins):** James Hedley (Fortec); **Race 3 (20 mins):** Matias Zagazeta (Argenti Motorsport)

■ **Ginetta Junior Championship**
Race 1 (14 laps): Callum Voisin (R Racing); **Race 2 (9 laps):** Voisin; **Race 3 (13 laps):** Voisin

■ **Mini Challenge**
Race 1 (23 laps): Max Bird (Excelr8 Motorsport); **Race 2 (23 laps):** Max Coates (Graves Motorsport); **Race 3 (21 laps):** Dan Zelos (Excelr8 Motorsport)

■ **Ginetta GT4 Supercup**
Race 1 (19 laps): Carlito Miracco (Preptech UK); **Race 2 (24 laps):** Adam Smalley (Elite Motorsport); **Race 3 (24 laps):** Tom Hibbert (Rob Boston Racing)

Lorcan Hanafin capitalised during the opening Porsche race

RESULTS

BTCC
Round 7
Laps: 24 Track: damp but drying

	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Tom Oliphant	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	19m50.305s
2	Gordon Shedden (9)	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	+0.188s
3	Dan Rowbottom	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	+4.603s
4	Jake Hill (39)	MB Motorsport Ford Focus	+9.811s
5	Ash Sutton (75)	Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50	+10.007s
6	Tom Ingram (66)	Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N	+11.289s
7	Chris Smiley	Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N	+11.633s
8	Aiden Moffat	Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50	+11.938s
9	Josh Cook (48)	BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R	+15.398s
10	Jack Goff	Team Hard Cupra R	+15.720s

11 Dan Lloyd (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) +15.982s; 12 Senna Proctor (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +16.339s; 13 Jason Plato (21) (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) +17.510s; 14 Stephen Jelley (27) (WSR BMW 330i M Sport) +18.771s*; 15 Rory Butcher (33) (Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla) +19.025s; 16 Carl Boardley (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) +19.257s; 17 Adam Morgan (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport) +22.713s; 18 Aron Taylor-Smth (Team Hard Cupra R) +23.051s; 19 Tom Chilton (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport) +23.443s; 20 Colin Turkington (57) (WSR BMW 330i M Sport) +24.816s; 21 Sam Osborne (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) +24.683s **; 22 Jade Edwards (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +25.081s; 23 Ollie Jackson (15) (MB Motorsport Ford Focus) +27.159s; 24 Sam Smelt (Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla) +28.500s; 25 Jack Butel (Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N) +28.720s; 26 Andy Neate (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) +33.172s; 27 Glynn Geddie (Team Hard Cupra R) +36.402s; 28 Nic Hamilton (Team Hard Cupra R) +37.808s; 29 Rick Parfitt (Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N) -1 lap. **Pole position:** Rowbottom 48.074s (90.45mph). **Winner's average speed:** 87.68mph. **Fastest lap:** Shedden 48.777s (89.15mph). **Lap leaders:** Oliphant 1-24. **Brackets** = success ballast; * = five-second penalty for out-of-position start. ** = 6.2s penalty for contact

Round 8: 27 laps Track: dry

	DRIVER	TIME
1	Ingram (33)	24m56.451s
2	Sutton (39)	+0.489s
3	Oliphant (75)	+0.527s
4	Rowbottom (57)	+0.972s
5	Cook (15)	+1.213s
6	Lloyd	+1.630s
7	Smiley (27)	+1.957s
8	Plato	+2.194s
9	Moffat (21)	+9.394s
10	Proctor	+8.794s

11 Goff (9) +9.232s; 12 Morgan +10.066s; 13 Chilton +10.468s; 14 Butcher +11.212s; 15 Taylor-Smith +11.599s; 16 Jackson +13.169s; 17 Turkington +13.590s; 18 Smelt +14.034s; 19 Osborne +14.909s; 20 Boardley +15.251s; 21 Shedden (66) +19.035s; 22 Edwards +20.337s; 23 Parfitt +22.885s; 24 Neate +23.690s; 25 Butel +23.818s*; 26 Hamilton +23.986s; 27 Hill (48) -2 laps; R Geddie 15 laps/damage; R Jelley 1 lap/accident. **Winner's average speed:** 78.46mph. **Fastest lap:** Cook 49.231s (88.33mph). **Lap leaders:** Oliphant 1-26; Ingram 27. * = 8.3-second penalty for contact.

Round 9: 24 laps Track: damp

	DRIVER	TIME
1	Morgan	19m57.584s
2	Goff	+1.541s
3	Moffat (15)	+3.807s
4	Plato (21)	+3.819s
5	Cook (39)	+4.448s
6	Proctor (9)	+4.874s
7	Butcher	+5.343s
8	Sutton (66)	+6.011s
9	Lloyd (33)	+6.375s
10	Smiley (27)	+6.980s

11 Rowbottom (48) +7.204s; 12 Ingram (75) +7.446s; 13 Hill +8.688s; 14 Turkington +9.922s; 15 Oliphant (57) +9.937s; 16 Shedden +10.141s; 17 Taylor-Smith +12.633s; 18 Chilton +14.169s; 19 Boardley +14.431s; 20 Osborne +14.829s; 21 Butel +16.248s; 22 Jelley +16.631s; 23 Smelt +21.528s; 24 Geddie +24.674s; 25 Neate +27.805s; 26 Parfitt +28.456s; 27 Edwards +28.683s; 28 Hamilton -2 laps; R Jackson 14 laps/damage. **Winner's average speed:** 87.14mph. **Fastest lap:** Butcher 48.955s (88.82mph). **Lap leaders:** Morgan 1-24. **Brackets** = success ballast

Drivers standings

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Ash Sutton	116
2	Tom Ingram	113
3	Josh Cook	90
4	Colin Turkington	77
5	Jake Hill	73
6	Tom Oliphant	72
7	Dan Rowbottom	66
8	Jason Plato	62
9	Jack Goff	61
10	Rory Butcher	60

11 Adam Morgan 59; 12 Gordon Shedden 53; 13 Aiden Moffat 51; 14 Dan Lloyd 51; 15 Stephen Jelley 48; 16 Chris Smiley 39; 17 Ollie Jackson 36; 18 Dan Cammish 30; 19 Senna Proctor 20; 20 Aron Taylor-Smith 9; 21 Tom Chilton 8; 22 Sam Osborne 4; 23 Carl Boardley 4; 24 Sam Smelt 2; 25 Jade Edwards 1.

Independents Trophy

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Sutton	127
2	Ingram	124
3	Cook	102
4	Rowbottom	90
5	Goff	89
6	Morgan	88
7	Lloyd	81
8	Plato	80
9	Shedden	76
10	Moffat	74

11 Smiley 65; 12 Taylor-Smith 37; 13 Cammish 32; 14 Proctor 32; 15 Boardley 26; 16 Chilton 25; 17 Jack Butel 10; 18 Rick Parfitt 7; 19 Nic Hamilton 7; 20 Edwards 7.

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COLUMNIST

ALEX WALKER

The 17-year-old ex-Formula 4 driver is taking Formula Ford by storm this year

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Rachel Bourne

Walker's getting used to winning

A strong end to 2020 gave Walker confidence

This season in Formula Ford 1600 with Kevin Mills Racing is going really well. I've won three National races out of eight and have missed the podium only twice. But we've just had a rough round at Silverstone so we're trying to pick ourselves up.

My route into Formula Ford is unusual. I did the Ginetta Junior scholarship before the 2019 season and from that decided to move from karts into that championship. We went to JHR Developments to get a Ginetta Junior car and maybe do some tests, but the team suggested a grippy slicks-and-wings car would better suit my driving style.

The choice on our budget was to do either more races in Ginetta Junior or fewer races in British Formula 4, and we thought F4 is the better championship. We only did four rounds and I didn't test beforehand but I improved so much at every race.

We then didn't have to budget to do the whole 2020 F4 season and that's where Formula Ford came in. My dad Jeremy used to race in Formula Ford with PWR1's Phil Wills. They've kept in touch since and Phil rang to offer me a go. We did two sessions at Blyton just to see if I could change gear! We then decided FF1600 was a good option.

My first race was the Champion of Snetterton against strong opponents and I led for three-quarters of the way. We carried that into the National series where we tended to be at the back end of the front pack, but we had a mid-to-end-season blip with our engines. Then at the end-of-season Champion of Donington we were fastest all day so that filled us with confidence for 2021.

Over the winter we spoke to Kevin [Mills] who won FF1600's 2020 National championship dominantly with Neil Maclennan. I'd got on Kev's radar running at Castle Combe, his local track, then we got to know each other throughout the year. But Phil helped us out so much across 2020 so it was a hard choice between him and Kev for 2021 – I had many sleepless night over it!

In 2021's Donington Park National season opener I won two of the three races – that was an insane weekend. From the Champion of Donington race just before it I knew we were favourites. Also I had so much confidence overtaking, which has been my thing this year! One of the Donington wins was from a reversed grid. It was so much fun going from eighth to first.

For Knockhill's round two we struggled in initial pre-weekend testing but once I nailed the uphill chicane we went to the top of the timesheets. And in qualifying – I still don't know where this came from – I got a really good run from the last corner and the lap time on my dashboard was so fast I thought it was a glitch! But then my pitboard said I'm six or seven tenths clear. I thought 'OK, I can't go quicker than that', so I parked it in the pits. Sitting there was the most stressful eight minutes of my life. I then took first and second places in the two Knockhill races.

Walker was so fast he thought his dash glitched

Silverstone's round three was controversial. I finished third in race one after a close battle. The next race was wet, and we struggle at the moment getting wet set-up right. But I felt it was one of the best races I've done, because it was really hard to hold the car at that pace consistently. I used my racecraft and somehow got the lead.

Then I had an incident with [rival racer] Max Esterson and retired with broken suspension; we didn't feel too happy about it. In the third race, starting from the back, I recovered to eighth.

With the Silverstone results I've lost the championship lead. I had wanted to finish on the podium every race but that's gone out the window: I'm now trying to win as many races as possible. I also feel we've done our hard rounds. I already want to get going again, to put right what happened at Silverstone and get back to where we belong.

Further ahead, F1's not really an option financially so somewhere like GTs, LMPs or even a single-seater drive in IndyCar would be my dream, and I'd like my next move to be to stepping-stone classes like LMP3 or GT4. I've been at the F4 and Formula Ford level for three years now and I've learned more than I could have hoped for, and now I'm looking to move up.

I'm pleased with how 2021 has gone but like every driver I want more, and I want to be the one lifting the trophy at the end of the year. I'd imagine it's going to come down to the last round. The championship is definitely realistic and is our aim.

"My Knockhill pole time was so fast I thought it was glitch on my dash!"

READER SURVEY

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Matt James – editor

IF YOU WOULD PREFER TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY ONLINE PLEASE GO TO www.surveymechanics.com/s/motorsportnews

SECTION A

1. How often do you read Motorsport News?

I am a subscriber	❑1	Once a month	❑5
Every week	❑2	Once every 2-3 months	❑6
3 times a month	❑3	Less often	❑7
Twice a month	❑4	Never	❑8

2. How long have you been reading Motorsport News?

Less than 6 months	❑1	11-20 years	❑6
6-12 months	❑2	21-30 years	❑7
1-2 years	❑3	31-40 years	❑8
3-5 years	❑4	40+ years	❑ 9
6-10 years	❑5		

3. What sort of value for money do you think Motorsport News offers vs other motorsport publications you buy?

Very good	❑1	Reasonable	❑3
Good	❑2	Poor	❑4

4. How much time, in all, did you spend reading or flicking through Motorsport News?

0-15 minutes	❑1	1-2 hours	❑5
16-30 minutes	❑2	2-3 hours	❑6
31-45 minutes	❑3	More than 3 hours	❑7
46 minutes - 1 hour	❑4		

5. How much did you enjoy this issue of Motorsport News?

Very much	❑1	Not very much	❑3
Quite a lot	❑2	Not at all	❑4

6. Listed below, in order, are the items in this issue of Motorsport News

a) please indicate any items you did not read. Tick as many as apply
b) please rate each of the items you read. Tick one box per item

	a) ARTICLES	b) RATING OF ARTICLES please tick one box per line only			
	Did not read	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
	1	2	3	4	5
Cover/front page	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Comment	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
F1 report	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Racing News	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Rally News	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Historics	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
WRC report	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
British GT report	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Q&A Malcolm Wilson	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
MN Circuit preview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
BTCC report	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Driver Column	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
National reports	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
What's On	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Classified – Marketplace	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Motor Free Ads	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Web Directory	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

7. Looking at the publication as a whole, how do you feel about the amount of coverage of each of the following in Motorsport News?

	Would like more 1	Just right 2	Would like less 3
Formula 1	❑	❑	❑
Touring cars	❑	❑	❑
World Rallying	❑	❑	❑
National Rallying	❑	❑	❑
Administration/organisation	❑	❑	❑
Sportscars	❑	❑	❑
Historic Racing/Rallying	❑	❑	❑
Club Racing	❑	❑	❑
Short oval	❑	❑	❑
Rallycross	❑	❑	❑
Karting	❑	❑	❑
Trackdays	❑	❑	❑
Engineering	❑	❑	❑
Tuning	❑	❑	❑
Other	❑	❑	❑

SECTION B

8. What are your reasons for your interest in motorsport?

Enthusiast	❑1	Participant	❑3
Volunteer	❑2	Employment	❑4

9. Are you a competition licence holder?

Yes	❑1	No	❑2

10. If yes, what kind of licence do you have?

Race	❑1	Other	❑3
Rally	❑2		

11. How long have you followed motorsport?

0-2 years	❑1	11-20 years	❑4
3-5 years	❑2	21-30 years	❑5
6-10 years	❑3	More than 30 years	❑6

12. How many events do you attend per year?

Up to 5	❑1	More than 10	❑3
6-10	❑2		

13. Give the names of three events you might plan to visit this year or in 2022:

1.....
2.....
3.....

14. How much do you spend watching motorsport per year?

Less than £10	❑1	£51-£100	❑4
£11-£20	❑2	Over £100	❑5
£21-£50	❑3		

15. Do you travel to events?

Yes, up to 50 miles	❑1
Yes, up to 100 miles	❑2
Yes, all over the country	❑3
Not at all	❑4

16. What is your nearest big town?

.....

17. Where do you source motorsport information?

Internet	❑1
TV/Radio	❑2
Magazines	❑3

18. Do you follow Motorsport News on social media?

Twitter	❑1	Instagram	❑3
Facebook	❑2	Other	❑4

19. Which of these websites do you use?

	Regularly 1	Occasionally 2	Never 3
www.autosport.com	❑	❑	❑
www.motorsport.com	❑	❑	❑
www.bbc.co.uk	❑	❑	❑
www.btcc.net	❑	❑	❑
www.wrc.com	❑	❑	❑
www.motorsport-news.co.uk	❑	❑	❑

SECTION C – ABOUT YOU

20. Are you?

Male	❑1
Female	❑2
Prefer not to say	❑3

21. Which age band do you fall into?

Under 25	❑1	55-64	❑5
25-34	❑2	65-74	❑6
35-44	❑3	Over 75	❑7
45-54	❑4		

22. Are you the main wage earner in your household?

Yes	❑1	No	❑2

23. What is the occupation of the main wage earner in your household? If retired, please also tick former occupation.

Company owner	❑1
Professional (eg lawyer, accountant, engineer, doctor)	❑2
Senior manager (eg company/finance/IT)	❑3
Middle manager (eg IT, sales, marketing, publican, office)	❑4
Corporate/office/clerical (eg salesperson, office worker)	❑5
Public service (eg police, teacher, nurse)	❑6
Artistic and creative profession (eg journalist, musician)	❑7
Tradesperson (eg plumber, electrician)	❑8
Service occupation (eg waiter, shop assistant, caretaker)	❑9
Other (eg building/farm worker, cleaner, porter)	❑0
Retired	❑x

24. Are you:

Single	❑1	Widowed	❑4
Married	❑2	Divorced	❑5
Living with partner	❑3	Separated	❑6

25. What is your gross household income?

Under £20,000	❑1	£40,001 -£50,000	❑4
£20,001-£30,000	❑2	£50,001-£75,000	❑5
£30,001-£40,000	❑3	£75,001-£100,000	❑6

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Derek Daly

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The Irishman tackles the posers from the Motorsport News readers p20

Mexican holds his nerve on the streets of Baku to pick up the pieces as title chasers face disaster

PEREZ SURVIVES THE CHAOS TO OPEN HIS RED BULL VICTORY ACCOUNT

By Matt James

Azerbaijan Grand Prix winner Sergio Perez feared that his Red Bull-Honda would fail on the final lap of the restarted race as an hydraulic problem struck his Honda-powered car.

The Mexican inherited the lead when team-mate Max Verstappen, who had led the event from lap 18 and was steering a course to victory, suffered a tyre failure, which pitched him into the wall.

Perez fended off Lewis Hamilton during a two-lap restart dash to the flag as the Mercedes man slithered off the circuit at Turn 1. Hamilton recovered to 15th.

Perez said he was fearful that his machine would have ground to a halt before the end.

"We were close to retiring the car, but luckily we managed to finish the race. And really, it was quite difficult all the way until the end," said the relieved winner.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner added: "We were really concerned that the car wouldn't get to the end of the race, which is why he stopped after the chequered flag.

"You thought that we could only lose when they got the restart, but thankfully it all worked out tremendously well, and Sergio did a great, great job."

Report, page 4

Perez took second F1 win

Hamilton locks up and loses potential podium

WRC

OGIER CONSOLIDATES WRC LEAD WITH WIN

Champion stretches his WRC lead in Sardinia p28

FEATURE

THE CHANGING FACE OF NATIONAL HOT RODS

John Christie's new Lotus position p14

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RACING REPORTS

Photos:Roy Dempster, Peter Scherer

YORKSHIRE MOTORSPORT FESTIVAL: BY PETER SCHERER

Graham Hill finally got to compete in his Maguire Mini

Steve Bailey topped the times after Sunday run

Jim Crawford's Indy racer was on display

TAKING MOTORSPORT HISTORY TO THE MASSES

***Peter Scherer** enjoyed the sight and sounds of a new historic showpiece in Yorkshire*

It came from an idea by racer Michael McErlain. His plan was for a closed-road hillclimb, the first in Yorkshire, to take advantage of the more progressive legislation.

Originally the plan was to run the first event in 2020 but Covid restrictions put an end to that. But the momentum behind the initiative continued and the Yorkshire Motorsport Festival was born. It feature the Wolfstones Hillclimb course, an 0.8-mile run just north of Holmfirth. It is slap bang in the middle of Last of the Summer Wine country.

Despite late restrictions which forced the cancellation of the planned live music, the inaugural festival was a resounding success despite the changeable weather.

There were a variety of motorsport activities over the spread of the 125-acre site. Autotests, trade stands, grasstracking, drag racing and manufacturer displays kept those who attended entertained and, for many, it was their first sight of live motorsport.

The hillclimb event itself was managed by Mid Derbyshire Motor Club and ran over all three days of the festival. With an emphasis on pre-1986 era, there was plenty of mouth-watering machinery interspersed with demonstrations of historic stock cars and the Slowly Sideways Rally Club.

Friday's live action was a one-day event for the Benjafield Racing Club. As a Bentley-based association, all but four of the cars entered were pre-War Bentley derivatives.

In the damp conditions, Julian Grimwade's Frazer Nash proved unbeatable while Alastair Littlewood's Bentley finished in second. They may have grabbed the headlines, but there was plenty of interest in Robert Abrey's Stanley Steamer.

Newer cars took to the hill on Saturday. Spectators were given two main options for viewing: the first was next to the main display areas and gave a view of the drag up the final hill to the finish, while the second option took in the start and climb into the first corner.

The tight circuit favoured the lower-powered cars from the start. After the first day's action which included two timed runs after earlier practice, Graham Hill's Maguire Mini had been quickest overall. "The car been hardly used, but stored for years in Germany until I bought it just over a year ago," he said.

Robert Abery's Stanley Steamer

His time of 66.53 seconds from his first run, gave him a lead of 0.06s over Steve Bailey's Ford Escort Mk1.

There were plenty of cars with a history in the hillclimb too and they ranged from Graham Scarborough in the ex-Chuck Nicholson British Saloon Car Championship Ford Capri to Ian Medcalf's unique Fiat 500, originally debuted by Peter Day in Special Saloons with a two-cylinder engine, half of a Ford BDA.

Medcalf explained: "I have been doing speed events with it for 30 years now, but it now has an A Series Swiftune engine."

John Doubleday brought along his ex-Doc Merfield 5.7-litre Ford Cortina. "It's a 5.7 litre Chevy engine now, that was previously used in a powerboat," he explained.

Running for the first time in many years was the Vauxhall Magnum John Pope Special. Recently rebuilt and powered by 5.4 litres of twin-turbocharged Aston Martin grunt and producing 615bhp.

Hill managed to improve on his final run, but it wasn't enough to take the fastest overall time as Bailey set a sensational 63.74s time on his final run to take the victory spoils by 0.12s.

Chris Livesey ex-Tommy Entwistle GEM TVR Prototype was third quickest from the Minis of Matt Clarke and Mark Forster.

Incidents were few but Colin Powell managed to put his Mini off into a ditch and, exiting the same corner, Peter Dorlin found another ditch in Richard Butterfield's Jaguar Mk2.

As the field made their return the paddock, the crowd lined the circuit edge, applauding the end of a memorable weekend. Let's hope it will be back in 2022. ■

KIRKISTOWN: 500MRCI BY RICHARD YOUNG — JUNE 26

Two wins for Morgan Dempsey ignited his FF1600 title ambitions

Others were unable to keep pace with Mike Johnston's rapid MG

DEMPSEY TAKES ADVANTAGE OF RIVALS' TROUBLES

Jordan Dempsey scored back to back wins at Kirkistown to move himself to the top of the Northern Irish Formula Ford 1600 points table and he was helped when mechanical misfortunes sidelined erstwhile rivals David McCullough and David Parks in the second of Saturday's two races.

Dempsey didn't have things all his own way though. McCullough and Parks, plus Alan Davidson, ran him close in race one. In the second, it was left to Davidson to provide the opposition. He did that manfully in the early stages before Dempsey took command.

Ryan Campbell now heads the Pre 1990 championship from Brandon McCaughan with Davidson playing catch-up in third having been sidelined in the first two rounds.

The burgeoning Irish Legends continue to go from strength to strength and produced three great races featuring the Barrable brothers Robert and Peter, along with Geoff Richardson, who spent much of the time side by side.

At the close of play, the winners were Peter Barrable in race one, Richardson in the second and Robert Barrable in the finale with overall victory going to Richardson, who was on the podium every time.

The frantic Fiesta Zetecs produced back-to-back victories for Mark Stewart – from Megan Campbell in the first and Colm Barrable in the second. The midfield antics brought out the safety car at least once and eventually there was a red flag as an assortment of drivers discovered that optimism will rarely triumph over inevitability – and never over Armco.

In the concurrent Mazda MX-5 encounters, former Hot Rod racer Gregory McMillan set the pace all the way – twice.

Among the saloons and GTs, Mike Johnston's GM-powered MG Midget showed them all the way – running as a GT – while top saloon pilot was Stephen Traub (Honda Integra) ahead of Peter Baxter (Seat Leon). The SHP Super squad were led home by Paul Parr in fourth overall.

RACE WINNERS

Northern Irish FF1600
Races 1 & 2: Jordan Dempsey (Van Diemen RF00)

Mazda MX-5
Races 1 & 2: Gregory McMillan

Fiesta Zetec
Races 1 & 2: Mark Stewart

Saloon/GT
Races 1 & 2: Mike Johnston (MG Midget GM)

Roadsports
Races 1 & 2: Jim Larkham (Radical PR06)

Legends
Race 1: Peter Barrable; **Race 2:** Geoff Richardson; **Race 3:** Robert Barrable

Jim Larkham and his Radical PR06 took both Roadsports races. In the first John Benson (Crossle 37S) followed him home ahead of Niall Fitzsimmons' Radical Prosport, but in Race two it was Fitzsimmons who took the second step on the podium ahead of Bernard Foley (Crossle).

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

DONINGTON PARK: HSCC BY MARCUS PYE — JUNE 26-27

McArthur was a winner in Classic Formula Ford 1600

Andy Newall took Guards Trophy hold in his BMW-motivated Chevron B6

McARTHUR BEATS JACKSON IN FF GRIPPER

Some superb racing characterised the Historic Sports Car Club's annual visit to Donington Park, from which the big news was that Cameron Jackson's unbeaten Formula Ford run was ended.

Having won Saturday's Classic and Historic championship races – extending his tally to 12 victories over four meetings – gear linkage failure undid the Winkelmann driver in Sunday morning's Pre-'82 round.

When the black machine disappeared, Henry Chart (Van Diemen RF81) and Jordan Harrison (Lola T540) gleefully scrapped on. Harrison jubilantly took the chequer by 0.145s, pursued by Ayrton Senna's FF1600 rival Rick Morris (Royale RP29) and fellow veteran Stuart Kestenbaum (Van Diemen RF80).

Having launched Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4) when his gearbox popped out of third leaving McLeans in Saturday's Historic opener, and contact was unavoidable, Jackson beat Callum Grant and Horatio Fitz-Simon (Merlyn Mk20As) to the chequer. McArthur, with a tyre-grazed nose, still finished fifth. James Hadfield reprepared the car for Sunday's race.

Jackson put up another tremendous fight, and enjoyed brief respite when McArthur speared off at the Old Hairpin to avoid a car they were lapping. Undaunted, Tom recovered from third, passing Fitz-Simon then Cam to seize the day. Both drivers thoroughly enjoyed the combat, Jackson magnanimous in defeat. Grant salvaged fifth behind Sam Harrison (Elden Mk8) having been sent spinning by Horatio in the Craner Curves.

Graham Fennymore beat off the determined Ian Pearson (Royale) in Historic FF2000. Andy Park mixed it with them, but a late drama on Sunday, promoted debutant Benn Tilley (Delta) to third. Stranded by fuel pump failure on Saturday, 1979 Euroseries champion Adrian Reynard bounced back to finish sixth on Sunday, having won the qualifying heat.

Guards Trophy polesitter Cam Jackson's Lenham's gearbox broke, leaving Andy Newall heading a Chevron 1-2-3, chased by Mark Colman and Westie/Sam Mitchell. John Spiers (TVR Griffith) topped the GT runners, with Andrew Haddon (Lotus Elan) second, having demoted John Davison's on the line.

Historic F3 returnee Andrew Hibberd won both 1000cc races, despite a spin on Saturday. Chevron drivers Jeremey Timms (B15) and Benn Simms (B17) gave him a run for his money.

Michael Lyons blitzed the Aurora Trophy races, beating Martin Stretton (two-litre F2 March 712) and Paul Campfield (F5000 Chevron B24) over the two days, Martyn Donn (F2 Chevron B27) was a fine third on Sunday.

Lotus Elan drivers John Davison and Paul Tooms were separated by Kevin Kivlochan's AC Cobra in Historic Road Sports. The '70s version, restarted after coolant blown from Greg Thornton's Ferrari sent several cars spinning, was a benefit for Morgan Plus 8 racers Will and Richard Plant.

Simon Garrad was untouchable in the Dunlop Saloon Car Cup opener, clear of Sean Brown (Ford Sierra RS500) and Jason Hughes (Vauxhall Vectra). In the absence of Garrad's Nissan Skyline, first-race spinner Steve Soper took the sequel but apologised for clobbering David Clark's Bastos Camaro on the climb to McLeans en route. Dan Williamson (Falcon Sprint) headed the Historics home, as he has in every round this term.

RACE WINNERS

Classic Formula Ford
Race 1: Cameron Jackson (Winkelmann WDF2);
Race 2: Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4)

Historic Formula Ford
Race 1: Cameron Jackson (Winkelmann WDF2);
Race 2: Jordan Harrison (Lola T540)

Historic Formula Ford 2000
Races 1&2: Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81);
Qualifying heat 1: Ben Glasswell (Reynard SF77);
Qualifying heat 2: Adrian Reynard (Reynard SF79)

Historic F3
Races 1&2: Andrew Hibberd (Brabham-MAE BT18)

Dunlop Saloon Car Cup
Race 1: Simon Garrad (Nissan Skyline GT-R R32);
Race 2: Steve Soper (BMW E36 M3)

Guards Trophy
Andy Newall (Chevron-BMW B6)

Thundersports
Races 1&2: Dean Forward (McLaren-Chevrolet M8F)

Aurora Trophy
Races 1&2: Michael Lyons (Lola-Chevrolet T400)

GT and Sports Car Cup
Andrew Haddon/Andy Wolfe (Lotus Elan)

Historic Road Sports
John Davison (Lotus Elan S1)

70s Road Sports
Will Plant (Morgan +8)

GT & SPORTS CAR CUP

Haddon and Wolfe top a popular addition to the UK-based calendar

Now in its 15th year, Flavien and Vanessa Marcais' GT & Sports Car Cup's reputation is built on superb Pre-1966 cars, excellent preparation, exemplary driving standards and camaraderie, thus upholds Historic motor sport's finest traditions.

Sunday's event – added to the UK-based calendar because of uncertainty surrounding continental European fixtures – was enthusiastically received by regulars.

Spa Six Hours winners Andrew Haddon and Andy Wolfe won the hour-long race in the former's Lotus Elan, out-handling the AC Cobra of Chris Chiles Jr/Simon Garrad's each side of the mandatory pitstop. The ex-Peter Lumsden/Peter Sargent Lister-Jaguar Le Mans coupe of Fred Wakeman/Patrick Blakeney-Edwards pipped Matt and Mike Wrigley's Jaguar E-type low-drag coupe for third.

When Doug Muirhead's Austin-Healey 3000 lost its oil during Saturday qualifying, co-driver Jeremy Welch sought permission to swap cars for raceday, returning with his own. Welch established a healthy GT3 class lead before installing Muirhead, who kept his nerve to beat the fast-closing ex-Le Mans Healey 'DD300' of Dutchmen Christiaen van Lanschot/Karsten Le Blanc. GT2 fell to Porsche 911 pair Richard Cook/Richard Tuthill who caught and passed the ex-Gordon Spice Morgan Plus 4 SLR of Calum Lockie/Simon Orebi Gann.

Haddon and Wolfe's Lotus Elan controlled the race

THUNDERSPORTS

The thunder returns to Donington with two victories for Dean Forward

Inspired by Motor Circuit Developments' Thundersports series which ran from 1983 into the '90s – but without the centre-seat CanAm cars which dominated its later seasons – the HSCC's retrospective attracted two 850bhp monsters and a host of two-litre Group 6 cars to Donington for its second airing of the year.

Alas, the sumo wrestling bout between Dean Forward (in Jamie Thwaites' McLaren-Chevrolet M8F) and Scot Calum Lockie (in Lionel and Richard Dodkins' March-Chevrolet 717), didn't quite happen. Gearbox failure put Lockie out on Saturday, freeing Forward to roar away from 1970s' hero John Burton (Chevron B26) and Mark Richardson (Lola T290).

The ex-Helmut Kelleners March was refettled for Sunday's race. Lockie grunted through the field to within sight of the orange McLaren, only for its massive nose to fly off and disintegrate on the pits straight, scattering debris over the track. A safety car was deployed, and when racing resumed Thwaites completed his double, pursued by Richardson and John Spiers (Osella PA3).

The bargain Sports 2000 sub-set provided the best battle. Trevor Welsh (Lola T492), Will Schryver (Royale RP37) and Tim Jacobsen (Shrike P15) jostled for supremacy and after numerous order changes finished in that order split by less than 0.4s.

Forward took advantage of woe for rival Lockie

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

On this day (Thursday) in 1948 Achille Varzi, a colossus of pre-World championship grand prix racing, was killed when his Alfa Romeo clipped a barrier and somersaulted at a damp Bremgarten in practice for the Swiss Grand Prix.

A classical stylist yet ferocious and calculating competitor, Varzi was worthy adversary to Tazio Nuvolari. Further, no less a figure than Juan Manuel Fangio described Varzi as a "God" and "probably the driver I have most admired in my life, a man who cared only for his art". Varzi was vital in Fangio's decision to come to Europe.

Yet there was more to Varzi's story even so, as for a time his talent was shrouded by the grip of a morphine addiction.

And Peter Windsor, showcasing unearthed rare photos of Varzi and paraphrasing the words of Nigel Roebuck, covers all this and more in his moving Varzi tribute on his YouTube channel. You can watch this at: youtube.com/watch?v=rseGNUEBieY or by searching for '"Morphine isn't kind...": The Achille Varzi story By Peter Windsor'.

Graham Keilloh

TV GUIDE

This weekend we get the second Red Bull Ring Formula 1 race in a week, and if that's not enough for you Sky Sports F1 has some Austrian retro action with the welcome return of F1 Classic Races. The absorbing 1999 Austrian race is shown in full today (Thursday) at 1400hrs-1600hrs, and on Saturday evening (2000hrs-2030hrs) you get highlights of 1982's thriller.

Sky's F1 weekend coverage kicks off as usual later this afternoon with the F1 Show (1700hrs-1800hrs) followed by the drivers' press conference (1800hrs-1930hrs). Ted Kravitz's notebooks also make a welcome return, with his qualifying saunter on Saturday at 1730hrs-1800hrs (then repeated several times) and the race version at 1700hrs-1730hrs on Sunday.

Meanwhile Channel 4's qualifying highlights are at 1830hrs-2000hrs on Saturday and the race's best bits are at 1830hrs-2100hrs on Sunday.

Catch '99 Austrian GP

Sky Sports F1 also offers a few chances to watch the best of last weekend's British GT showpiece Silverstone 500, first this evening (2230hrs-2330hrs) and then again tomorrow (Friday, 1600hrs-1700hrs) and early Saturday (0000hrs-0100hrs).

BT Sport 2 tomorrow afternoon has an eclectic run of motorsport highlights, starting at 1500hrs with the Safari Rally, followed by three V8 Supercars races from Darwin and concluding with Asian Le Mans Series.

Graham Keilloh

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX RED BULL RING
Practice 1: Friday, 1000hrs-1145hrs, Sky Sports F1
Practice 2: Friday, 1345hrs-1530hrs, Sky Sports F1
Practice 3: Saturday, 1045hrs-1210hrs, Sky Sports F1
Qualifying: Saturday, 1300hrs-1535hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race: Sunday, 1230hrs-1700hrs (start time: 1400hrs), Sky Sports F1

FIA FORMULA 3 RED BULL RING
Practice: Friday, 0825hrs-0920hrs, Sky Sports F1
Qualifying: Friday, 1245hrs-1325hrs, Sky Sports F1
Sprint race 1: Saturday, 0925hrs-1025hrs, Sky Sports F1
Sprint race 2: Saturday, 1620hrs-1720hrs, Sky Sports F1
Feature race: Sunday, 0905hrs-1005hrs, Sky Sports F1

INDYCAR MID-OHIO
Qualifying: Saturday, 1800hrs-1930hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race: Sunday, 1730hrs-1900hrs, Sky Sports F1

W SERIES RED BULL RING
Race: Saturday, 1500hrs-1620hrs, Channel 4

NASCAR ROAD AMERICA
Race: Sunday, 1900hrs-2300hrs, Premier Sports 1

LISTINGS

SATURDAY

■ **Oulton Park, Cheshire**
MSVR meeting: GT Cup, Porsche Club, Porsche Sprint, 911 Challenge, Track Attack Race club **Starts** racing from 1130hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Silverstone, Northants**
BARC meeting: Britcar, Britcar Trophy, Caterham Seven, Caterham Seven 310R, Caterham Seven 270R, Caterham Roadsport, Caterham Academy, Racing Saloons **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1315hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0935hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £15 **Web** silverstone.co.uk **Advance tickets only**

■ **Brands Hatch, Kent**
American SpeedFest: Euro NASCAR, Bernie's V8s, Formula 5000, Silhouettes, Legends Pickups **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1145hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1040hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £30, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

■ **Snetterton, Norfolk**
BARC meeting: Radical Challenge, Radical SR1, C1 Challenge, MaX5, Junior Saloons, Kumho BMW **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1130hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0955hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

■ **Thruxton, Hants**
Truck meeting: Caterham Graduates, Mighty Minis, MGOC, Hyundai Coupe, Welsh Sports/Saloons, Sports/Saloons **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1330hrs (practice from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1045hrs (practice from 0855hrs) **Admission** adult £21, under 16 free **Web** thruxtonracing.co.uk **Advance tickets only**

■ **Castle Combe, Wilts**
CCRC meeting: FF1600, GT, Saloons, Hot Hatches, Sports-Racing Cars, Jaguars, Blue Oval Saloons/Classic Thunder, Pre 66/Pre 83 Touring Cars, Pre 93/Pre 03 Classic Touring Cars, MG Trophy, Equipe GTS, Equipe Pre '63, Equipe Libre **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1345hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) Sunday, racing from 0955hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) **Admission** adult £15, under 16 free **Web** castlecombecircuit.co.uk **Advance tickets only**

■ **Knockhill, Fife**
CSCC meeting: Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties, Future Classics, Magnificent 7s, Modern Classics, Classic K, New Millennium, Open Series, Turbo Tin Tops, FF1600, Classic Sports and Saloons, Mini Cooper Cup, Fiesta ST, C1 Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1245hrs (qualifying from 0845hrs) Sunday, racing from 1245hrs (qualifying from 0845hrs) **Admission** adult £15, **Web** knockhill.com **Advance tickets only**

SUNDAY

■ **Lydden Hill, Kent**
LHMC meeting: Jack Sears Trophy, HRDC Allstars, Classic Alfa Challenge **Starts** racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 1030hrs) **Admission** adult £15, **Web** lyddenhill.co.uk **Advance tickets only**

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S **FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!**

Madeline Harbey caught this Lotus Cortina in full flight

Stuart Taunton enjoyed the BTCC

Martin Coote's photo from Brands

Aero tweak, sent in by Dean Chilvers

In the Brands kitty litter, from Gary Hill

NEXT WEEK

OUT THURSDAY, JULY 8

*Correct at time of going to press

EXCLUSIVE!

NATIONAL RALLY CALENDAR

We wrap up the major rally events for the remainder of 2021

NATIONAL SERVICE

All the national racing reports included

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EDITORIAL
Editor: Matt James
Tel: 07884 117139
Email: Matt.James@kelsey.co.uk

Deputy Editor: Graham Keilloh
Tel: 07973 829291
Email: Graham.Keilloh@kelsey.co.uk

Art Editor: Mike Stokoe
Tel: 07957 282340
Email: mikestokoe@gmail.com

Digital Content Producer: Helena Hicks
Helena.Hicks@kelsey.co.uk

Contributors
Rallying Editor: Colin Clark
Historics Editor: Paul Lawrence
Rallycross Editor: Hal Ridge
Columnist at large: David Addison
Columnist and track tester: Andrew Jordan
Technical Editor: Carl Faux

ADVERTISING
Director: David Lerpiniere
Tel: 01732 445326
Email: david@talkmediasales.co.uk

Sales Director: Russell Bedford
Tel: 01732 445328
Email: russell.bedford@talkmediasales.co.uk

Ad Manager: Natalie Harman
Tel: 01732 446757
Email: natalie.harman@talkmediasales.co.uk

PRODUCTION
Advert Production Manager: Matt Ryan
Tel: 01732 445755
Email: Production@talkmediasales.co.uk

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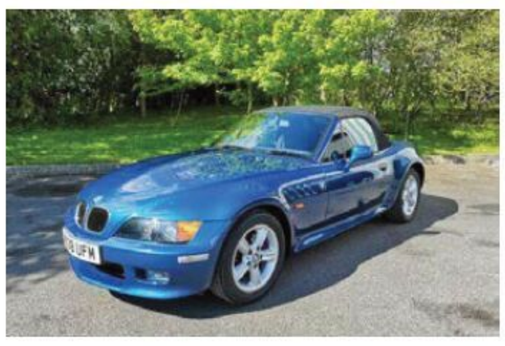

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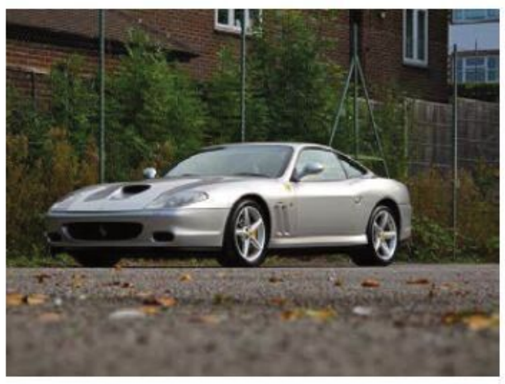

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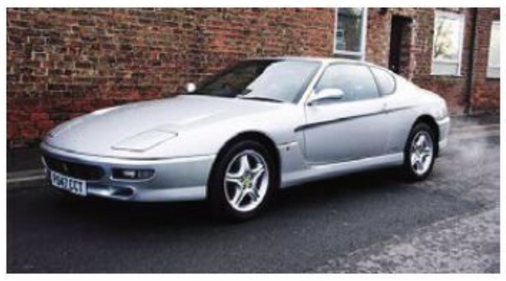

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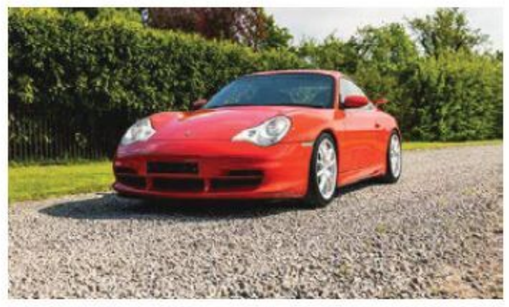

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THIS CLASSIFIED SECTION WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Russell Bedford
Account Director
T: +44 (0) 1732 445 328
E: Russell@talkmediasales.co.uk

Natalie Harman
Account Manager
T: +44 (0) 1732 446 757
E: Natalie.harman@talkmediasales.co.uk

Matt Ryan
Advert Production Manager
T: +44 (0) 1732 446 755
E: Production@talkmediasales.co.uk

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